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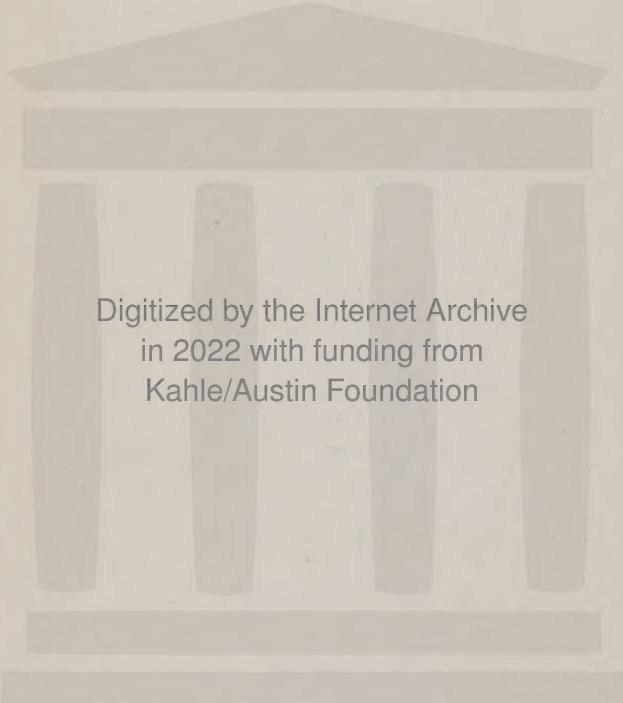




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COLONEL DOUGLAS DAWSON, 1903.

[Frontispiece



# A SOLDIER-DIPLOMAT

BY BRIGADIER-GENERAL  
SIR DOUGLAS DAWSON

G.C.V.O., K.C.B., C.B., C.M.G.

With portraits and illustrations

LONDON  
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

FIRST EDITION . . . 1927

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*Printed in Great Britain by  
Hazell, Watson & Viney, Ltd., London and Aylesbury.*

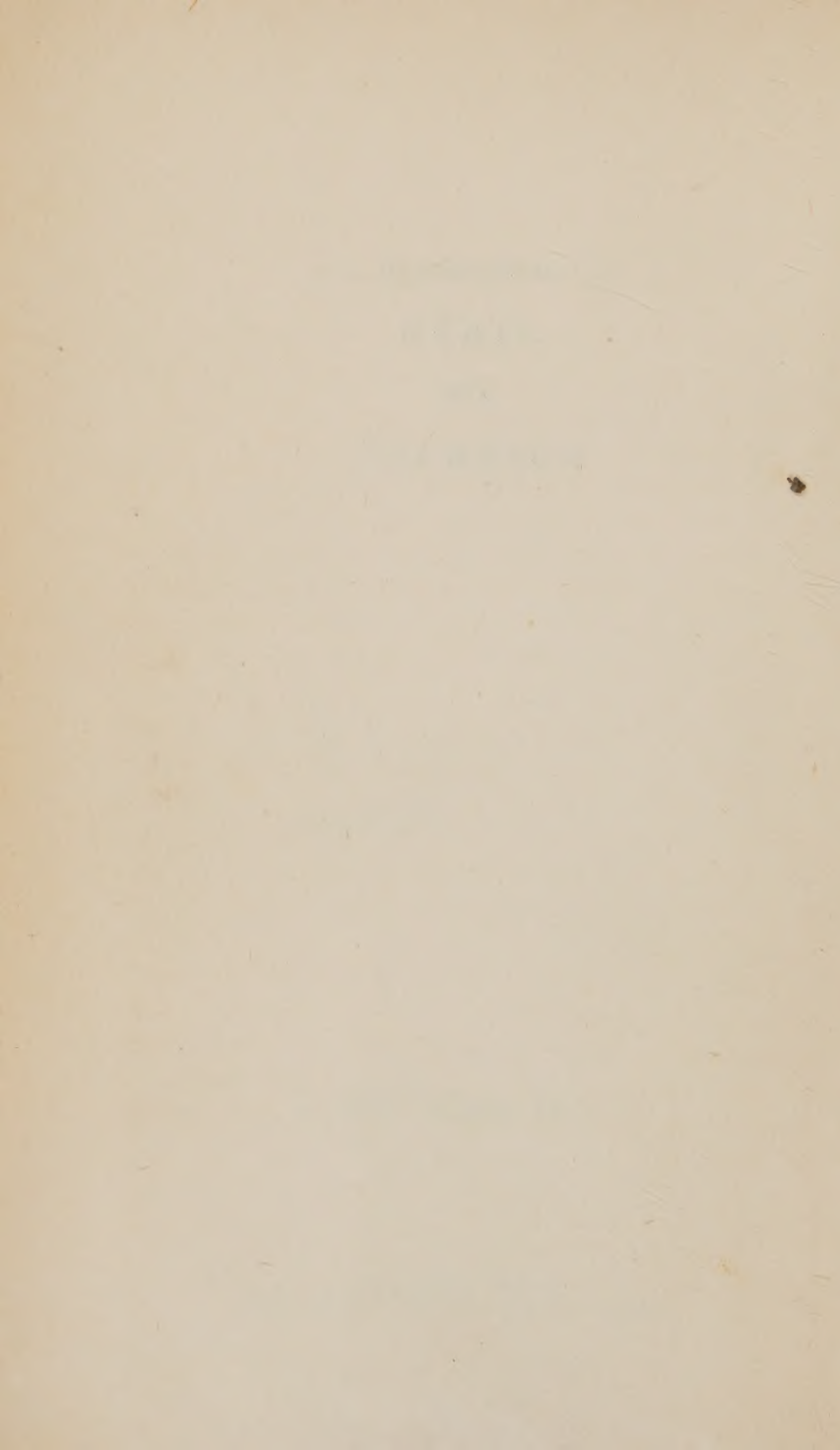


DEDICATED TO

AIMÉE

AND

ROSEMARY





## FOREWORD

IN trying to record some of the episodes in my life which in my old age I can recall, I ask for lenient treatment by those who may consider them worth perusal.

In the first place, I now regret that I never thought it worth while to keep a diary.

Further, in case what follows may be set down as mainly a frivolous record, to the exclusion of more serious matter, may I say that I have, for obvious reasons, purposely avoided more detailed allusion to my work than seemed necessary. A military attaché's post is essentially a subordinate one, involving strict reticence; moreover, I have no intention of inflicting on readers more than a passing allusion to the subject of dispatches and correspondence with authorities, both British and foreign, of which I have by me complete copies.

Finally, it was only while trying to recuperate after a very severe illness that I found the leisure necessary to take up the subject. Owing chiefly to the state of my health, the publication of these memoirs, the bulk of which was written in 1925, has been delayed until now.

D. D.

REMENHAM PLACE,  
HENLEY-ON-THAMES,  
*August 1927.*

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# A SOLDIER-DIPLOMAT

## CHAPTER I

### BOYHOOD—LORD BROUGHAM—ETON DAYS

SIX months after I was born my father, younger son of Lord Cremorne, and only brother of the first Earl of Dartrey, was killed at the battle of Inkerman, while commanding the five companies of Coldstream Guards there engaged, of which eight officers were killed and five wounded that morning. My dear mother was thus left a widow, at barely 20 years of age, with two sons, my brother Vesey being rather more than a year older than I am.

About three years later my mother married Mr. Charles Magniac, eldest son of Hollingworth Magniac of Colworth, Bedfordshire, and later M.P. for his division of the county. When we were quite small boys my stepfather inherited the estate of Colworth, where, when not in London, we lived until his death in 1891.

Thus during our school days and early life in the army, however irksome at times the restraints of school or duty may have been, we had always the home to return to during the holidays or when on leave from the regiment ; and it was indeed a home, for no father was ever kinder to his children than our stepfather was to Vesey and me.

And so our youth was passed amid the advantages offered by a big estate, where the many friends we brought there for hunting and shooting were always sure of a hearty welcome.

One of my earliest recollections is of the opportunity given us boys of meeting and conversing with the veteran statesman Lord Brougham.

At the time my brother and I were small boys, it was considered advisable on account of my mother's health for her to pass the winter on the Riviera. Consequently my stepfather took a villa at Cannes, where they spent one or more winter seasons, and where we boys came to during our Christmas holidays. Our house was called the Villa Beausite, afterwards turned into an hotel bearing the same name.

Cannes in the middle sixties was a small place, such as would scarcely be credited by anyone who sees it for the first time nowadays.

There were hardly any English people there. I recall Lord and Lady Abercorn, with the younger members of their family, with whom, among other expeditions, I remember paying a visit to the reputed island-prison of the "Man with the Iron Mask," whose tragic story made a deep impression on our youthful minds.

Also Lord Brougham, who then could only recently have become a widower, and who himself died shortly after.

So far as I can remember, our villa must have been adjacent to the residence of the founder of the town of Cannes, as Lord Brougham undoubtedly was, and I have a hazy idea that the grounds of the two properties touched. At any rate, it



seems to have been only through a boundary fence that we boys almost daily used to foregather with our great friend Reggie Brougham, nephew of Lord Brougham, and just about our own age.

Some of the mischievous pranks we used to indulge in at Cannes when we got together I recall to this day, but the one prominent figure which remains in my memory is that of Lord Brougham, I think in a tall hat, walking in the orange groves where we boys used to tear about, I fear sadly to the detriment of his desire for a peaceful stroll.

On the several occasions when we actually met him he would call us up and exchange greetings, and I bear pleasant recollections of him as a kindly, courteous old gentleman under what were possibly trying circumstances.

As Lord Brougham must then have been very nearly ninety years of age, the link of which I speak now extends approximately to over 150 years.

I wonder whether Miss Gertrude Kingston, should she chance to read these lines, will remember an incident, now nearly twenty years ago, which gave me the pleasure of meeting her on several occasions. She was at the time much interested in the production of a clever play largely concerned with the trial of Queen Caroline; and on one occasion when I was discussing it with her, I remarked that I feared the theme dealt with an historical incident of rather too recent occurrence. To this she replied that surely the subject might now be considered "ancient history."

When I told her that, though I hoped she did

not consider me a very old man, I had seen and conversed with the principal character in the play, she flattered me when I found it difficult to convince her that I was in earnest.

I have been told that reminiscences by those educated at Eton would lose interest without reference to those days.

In my case, next after my first years in the Guards, they were certainly the happiest of my early life, for, free from care of any sort, I enjoyed every moment of them.

But I am chary of lengthy allusion to this part of my life, for I have a feeling of shame that it can only record an absence of serious work, combined with a life given largely to amusement, and a rather unruly nature. It was only after I joined the Coldstream that I realised the attraction of existence devoted mainly to work, as a means to achievement of ambitions instilled entirely by the example of my stepfather, whose memory I ever honour.

After some years at school at Brighton and Cheam I went to Eton in 1867; for the first year I boarded at Dame Gulliver's and then went to my tutor, Oscar Browning's house. I started in Lower Fourth and left in 1872 in Upper Fifth Form. I must have learnt something during that time, for with the aid of a short tuition privately in London I passed direct into the Army in 1873.

For the year I was at Miss Gulliver's my fag-master was Flint, who had two mess-mates, Lubbock and Hoare. In case the following should be termed a stretch of imagination, I

would urge that its incredibility is probably the reason for my mind retaining it. The mess I fagged for were boys of healthy appetite, for on one occasion I purchased for them forty eggs for tea! After all, if (on the authority of a learned Provost of Eton, in his book recently published) one Eton boy could in 1862 eat thirteen sausages for breakfast, why shouldn't three Eton boys in 1867 eat forty eggs for tea?

At Gulliver's with me was A. C. Fountaine, whom in after-life I met on several occasions when hunting with the West Norfolk hounds, of which pack he was master.

Like most boys at Browning's I was a drybob. In our house at one time we boasted three in the Eleven, Longman, Tabor, and Cammell. An episode firmly fixed in my mind is a match we played against "Wayte's" for the Lower Boy Cup. I mentioned this only the other day to my friend and neighbour Sir John Edwards-Moss, in my time Captain of the Boats and by far the greatest "swell" of my Eton days. With the interest in and love of Eton which he bears to this day, he at once turned up an old *Eton Chronicle* of July 29, 1869, and we were able to confirm my recollection, which I was glad of, for I felt my old friend was rather sceptical as to my accuracy.

I had somehow developed a form of slow overhand bowling by which I could pitch the ball with reasonable certainty exactly where I wished to, while at the same time putting on a break either to right or left at will. With a highly pitched ball I offered thus an almost irresistible temptation to run out and slog at half-volley. In



the match above mentioned these tactics were so successful that in three overs I took nine wickets—three wickets per over—thereby achieving the hat trick three times in one match.

We won this match, and the next we played was against “Warre’s” for the final. Warre’s had two boys in the Eleven, Higgins (Captain) and Harris (Lord Harris), prominent in the cricket world to this day.

When I started to bowl, Higgins, who was umpiring, made no secret of it that he had come there specially to see if it was possible to “no-ball” me. After a few overs, however, he confessed he was unable to do so. Warre’s were too strong for us, largely owing to three of the Miles family—Napier, Archie, and Audley—later in the Eleven; they eventually won the match and the Cup. But one of the proudest moments of my life was when, just as we were leaving, “Sixpenny” Longman, who kept wicket for the Eleven, joined me and, patting me on the back, said, “Bravo, my boy; if you bowl like that next year we’ll have you in the Eleven.”

Alas! when next year came I had lost the art completely, and all my efforts to remember how I did it, and so repeat the triumph, were unavailing. I have often thought since that this might be taken as a concrete example of the “glorious uncertainty of cricket.”

I must now turn to a less creditable part of my Eton recollections. Dr. Hornby succeeded Dr. Balston as Head Master some time before I got into Fifth Form. He introduced various reforms,

which, I expect, were both excellent and necessary. Now, I believe boys' inclinations to be at heart more conservative than progressive, and I regret to say that there arose a feeling of unrest among the older ones which tended towards subversion of discipline. I hope I shall not be judged unkind in remarking that at times boys *collectively* can be as fiendish as it is possible to conceive, and the spirit of the day frequently took the form of "ragging" certain masters, especially the weakest disciplinarians.

As an example of the thoughtless and foolish practices then in vogue, I saw myself one morning the words "No popery" chalked in large letters on the Head Master's front door. Another silly joke was to run suddenly round a corner and jam in the tall hat of a newly arrived French master who was said to be too poor to buy himself a cap and gown. This must have been about 1869, for it was shortly afterwards reported that the unfortunate man had perished in Paris during the Commune.

But the most prominent victim was a certain mathematical master who was persecuted out of school by football "kick-about" being organised in his garden, while during school time (and I was up to him), his back being turned, showers of crackers were exploded on the black-board on which he was writing. In vain the Head Master decreed that unless the culprits gave themselves up the whole division would be penalised by an *Æneid* or a *Georgic* to write out. The boys were banded together by an oath never to confess, and to submit to the punishment.

And here comes to my mind an amusing but shameful episode in which I was largely concerned. In my house, and, alas ! in my passage, was a boy who dabbled in chemistry, whereby he frequently, to our great annoyance, created many unsavoury odours. On my mentioning this to the class, it was joyfully resolved to utilise some chemical concoction which I was to procure and use as a means whereby the class-room should be emptied and further study prevented. I duly unfolded the scheme to our "chemist," who gave me on the day appointed a very small phial containing some liquid ingredient, green in colour and quite hot. He strictly enjoined me not to let the cork out for more than a moment, as he said he could not conceive a more offensive smell in so small a compass, and would not answer for the consequences.

On arrival outside the class-room I was greeted by eager enquiries as to whether I had "got the stink," and where it was. I assured my enquirers it was in my pocket, but must be handled with care. Once inside the class-room, where I was seated in the second row, the excitement to see and handle "the stink" was such that I lost possession, the bottle was clawed from all directions, the cork came out, and the whole of the contents was spilled over the table and benches. In one instant the room was filled with such a pestilential odour that the whole class, master included, fought for the door and fled into the open air.

The usual demand for the instigator of this plot met with no response, and the punish-

ment ordained was cheerfully accepted by the class.

I now come to the culminating incident in connection with the unrest which at that time undoubtedly existed.

Among Dr. Hornby's reforms was included the abolition of "Election Saturday," a sort of minor Fourth of June in that the day closed with a procession of boats to the Brocas. The boys resented the innovation, and determined to mark the last celebration of Election Saturday in a manner which should record their disapproval.

A shopkeeper in the High Street, by name Stevens, used to show on the wall outside his house above his ground-floor window a model of a ship, which on occasions when Harrow won the match he painted Harrow blue. The result was naturally the destruction of the ship. In the year in question the ship had reappeared painted dark blue, with the word "Resurgam" underneath it.

The boys determined to have the ship down. On coming from the rafts, after the procession of boats, oars were brought, and a large crowd of boys looked on while attempts were made to break or dislodge the ship with the oars. It was found that the model was made of iron, very strong and fixed firmly to the wall, and soon stones were resorted to. In a moment there was hardly a window nearby on that side of the street that was not broken.

And now happened what I have since regarded as an error of judgment. Down the street came



in line a charge of masters against the dense mass of boys. The movement could only have one result, and the masters were worsted. I can see now one of them, more generally feared than loved, having climbed up the step of a house nearly opposite "Tap," as with his back to a door and his sleeves rolled up he called out, "Now let me see the boy that will come for me." In one instant a dozen boys were on him, and the last I saw of him was beneath a surging heap of them pommelling for all they were worth.

Just at this moment my attention was distracted by an even more serious episode. I heard shouts of "To Barnes Pool. Duck him! —duck him!" I found a number of boys, with a master whose arms and legs they had hold of, moving down the street to the bridge where the road crosses the entrance to Barnes Pool. The master in question can without unfairness be placed amongst those least popular in the whole school. Excitement at this moment ran high, and I must plead guilty to joining the procession which proceeded slowly up High Street towards the bridge. On arriving there, we had even got so far as hoisting the unfortunate gentleman half-way up the railings when his pleading reached the hearts of more than one of the young fiends who had hold of him. Protests against such treatment, coupled with appeals to the feelings of gentlemen, among which I have always been glad my voice was not the feeblest, finally prevailed. We set down our burden and he was escorted out of the crowd by some of his confrères.

Meanwhile, however, the masters had not been idle. I discovered later that a small boy, probably the smallest one there, had been caught and hurried across to Mr. Rouse's house, which faced the pool. Here he was locked up for the night, and the next morning the poor little chap was expelled.

The general punishment for this disgraceful incident was a mild one compared to its gravity, which I regarded as a sign of weakness on the part of the authorities; but when one considers the circumstances it is hard to find what other form the punishment could have taken.

The whole of Fifth Form was penalised to the extent of writing out an *Æneid*. Even in the performance of this task the insubordinate spirit continued to show itself, for we felt that in singling out Fifth Form an injustice had been done us. A certain night at a late hour was selected for the performance of the task, and all over college we sat up that night till an early hour of the next morning, while songs and other boisterous sounds enlivened the neighbourhood. There were indeed some grounds for resentment in singling out Fifth Form, for I myself was quite close to one, if not two, Sixth Form boys during the proceedings at Barnes Bridge.

I have described this disgraceful incident at some length in the hope that possibly the sequel which I am about to record may be held in some way to discount it, or at any rate to mitigate the criticism to which I may be exposed for doing so.

Years afterwards, during the Gordon Relief Expedition, at the battle of Gubat (January 19,

1885), when as a forlorn hope to reach the water we left the Zareba to try and fight our way through the hordes of dervishes blocking our route to the Nile, I came on a reminder of that stirring night at Eton. Huge masses of spearmen hovered on flanks and front awaiting a favourable moment to charge, as they had two days previously when they broke our square at Abou Klea, while the surrounding heights were crowned by sharpshooters, drawn from Gordon's highly trained troops which had recently deserted him. The problem was to avoid the patches of desert scrub which gave cover to the spearmen, thus affording a clear field for volley fire when they charged, while at same time offering as small a target as possible for the riflemen.

I had told Colonel Boscawen ("the Star" to his many friends), who by that time was in command of the square (all our senior officers being *hors de combat*), that I had observed a route which by changing direction periodically might be favourable for our purpose. We had about six miles of desert to traverse before reaching the river. Boscawen told me to remain by him and assist him in directing the movements of the square. Half-way to the river, just as I passed a section of a face of the square manned by Grenadiers, a big man fell forward on his face shot dead. His comrades were closing up to fill the gap when a little fellow with a sporting rifle jammed himself into the front rank between them. The Grenadiers were inclined to resent this and began grumbling in strong language, but when they saw the

wonderful practice with the rifle made by the stranger, they welcomed him, and he kept his place in the line till the evening, when having received and scattered the charge of the spear-men, we joyfully reached the river. No drink in the whole of my life has ever equalled the one I got at that moment. We had been several weeks in the desert on a very short water ration, and while going down in the square I had only a few drops left in the bottom of my water-bottle.

That night Charlie Beresford came to me and told me he had only one or two officers of the Naval Brigade left on their legs. He asked me if I knew of anyone—"at the end of a loose rope"—whom he might perhaps enlist in the service. I told him of the civilian I had seen that day in the square, and we at once sent someone off to find him. On questioning him I learned that he was a son of Mrs. Ingram, of the *Illustrated London News*. I asked if by chance he was a relation of the small boy who had suffered in connection with the Eton episode, and he replied that he was the boy himself. Charlie Beresford from that day attached him to the Naval Brigade; he was delighted to have been offered the post and served them well until the end of the campaign. Alas! only a year or two later I was grieved to read of his death. While big-game shooting in East Africa he had been killed by an elephant.

Another recollection of Eton I still preserve, and a very pleasant one it is, concerns the time shortly after I had left. About a year after I joined the Coldstream I was at Windsor playing for my battalion at cricket against the Scots



Guards, then quartered there. The match was a one-innings affair, and having some spare time at our disposal, Bill Drummond-Moray (Scots Guards) and I crossed the river to the playing fields. It happened that the Eleven were playing a match that day, and as we reached Upper Club they were just coming to tea under the trees there. My old friend Alfred Lyttelton, who had been in my division, was then Captain of the Eleven. He greeted me warmly and invited us to tea. And so we had tea in that hallowed spot with all its old associations and reminiscences, while the rooks cawed in the elms above us. I sat next to Alfred and we discussed old times, and I can safely say I never enjoyed a tea party more. I have always been fond of rackets, and had one day inveigled Alfred for the first time into a racket court; needless to say, he soon bested me at that game, as he did most people at any other.

At that time I was playing rackets frequently at Prince's, largely practice games for the university and school representatives, and Alfred was much interested hearing of the respective "form" of the school representatives, for he had of course got to the top in this as in other games. One remark of his on this occasion remains in my memory to this day. As we strolled back to college together, after tea, I said to him how odd it seemed to think that he was still at school while I was already an officer in the Army, and I added, "Captain of the Eleven and Keeper of the Field—what a 'swell' you have become!" He stopped and turned to me and said, "Douglas, if I live and go into Parliament, as I suppose I shall do,

even if I were to become Prime Minister, I can never be such a 'swell' again as I am to-day." In the actual acceptance of the word among public school boys, I hold that he was right, and who knows whether, had he lived, the time would not have arrived when I should have had occasion to remind him of his words that summer evening in Upper Club.

Talking of "swells" at Eton reminds me of a story told me by the late Colonel Oliver Montagu as illustrating what "hero-worship" signifies among boys. Oliver was quartered at Windsor commanding his regiment, the Royal Horse Guards. I may safely say that at that time there was no man in London who socially held the position of Oliver Montagu. Honoured by the friendship of the Prince of Wales, the *arbiter elegantiarum*, the favourite of society and the clubs, he stood out as the *beau sabreur par excellence* of his time.

One day he walked down from the cavalry barracks at Windsor to see a small nephew then at Eton, and, while strolling along the High Street together, Oliver, whose watch had stopped, asked his nephew the time. The boy had not got his watch, and Oliver said, "Never mind, here's a boy coming; I'll ask him." On his quitting the strange boy, the nephew asked the uncle, "Do you know ——?" "No," said Oliver. "Well," said the nephew, "you have got a cheek. Why, that was the Captain of the Eleven!"

By way of accentuating the moral contained in this story, I may mention that on the occasion

of a visit to London by "Ouida," the authoress, Lady Charles Beresford asked Oliver to meet her at dinner in Eaton Square and to play up to Ouida's ideal of the typical Life Guardsman, as evidenced by her book *Under Two Flags*. I was asked to make a fifth at dinner that night, and I need not say that, primed by our hostess and aided and abetted by our ever-genial host, we laid ourselves out to play up to the distinguished authoress's ideas of British Guardsmen, and I think we were fairly successful.

I cannot conclude these memories of Eton without alluding to the far from flattering prognostication as regards myself which my tutor thought fit to make on the occasion of my leaving.

My stepfather at the time showed me a letter he had received from Mr. Browning, in which, after trying, in the kindness of his heart, to gloss over my many peccadilloes, he could not refrain from adding that he "trembled for my future." Curiously enough, I came across this letter only the other day, and re-read an opinion which I feel anyone who cares to read my experiences at Eton may consider amply justified.

Some time during the late nineties, when on a visit to Berne, for I was at that time Military Attaché in Switzerland as well as France and Belgium, I met my old tutor. I had, both in dispatches and in private letters to Lord Wolseley, strongly recommended serious consideration by our authorities of the Swiss Army system and organisation, for purposes of home defence solely. I allude later to this subject (see "The Hague Peace Conference").

Thus about this time I paid several visits to Berne, where I was usually most hospitably lodged at the Legation by my old friend Mr. St. John, who had been our Minister in Belgrade when I was Military Attaché in Serbia, and had by then been similarly accredited in Switzerland.

One day, while I was staying there with him, my host informed me that Mr. Oscar Browning was dining at the Legation that night. I told him that Mr. Browning had been my tutor at Eton and of his letter to my stepfather; and it was with great pleasure that I met him once more after so many years. We three spent a most enjoyable evening, and I remember, after Mr. Browning left, how my host and I agreed that rarely did we meet a more cultured gentleman or one who was better company than my old tutor. He was, I think, genuinely pleased to see me again, and I cannot but hope that if ever, which I doubt, he remembered his prophecy, his mind was easier as regards my future when he left the Legation that evening. I much regret to have learnt, only recently, of Mr. Browning's death in Rome.



## CHAPTER II

### THE QUEEN'S COUNTY RIFLES—COLWORTH

MY first experience of soldiering was gained in the Militia. In those days patronage in the matter of commissions in the Militia was vested in Lords-Lieutenant of counties, and so it came about that soon after I left Eton I was nominated by my maternal grandfather (Lord Castletown) to a sub-lieutenancy in the Queen's County Rifles.

Later that year I joined them at Maryborough, where they were going through their annual training under the command of Colonel Carden, a Crimean veteran who had lost his arm in the war.

My brother-officers were mainly drawn from that class which in those days was so prominent in all that pertained to life in that country, the Irish landowner, now, alas! impoverished and widely scattered.

It was indeed a cheery community that met in the messroom at Maryborough, and I went through my first military training under the best and happiest auspices.

After a time we moved to huts in the Curragh Camp, to take part in the course of summer training of the troops concentrated there.

General Sir Thomas Steele, my father's old friend and brother-officer in the Coldstream, was at that time Commander of the Forces in Ireland,

and was then in residence at the Curragh. On arrival I reported myself, and received a most hearty welcome from the General and Lady Steele.

Later on Sir Thomas always greeted me as "the rebel," a name due to the following circumstances.

By what I looked upon afterwards as a risky decision on the part of the authorities, we had for our neighbours in the lines allotted to us in camp another Militia Regiment, the North Cork. Now, for some reason which I never fathomed, between the Queen's County Rifles and the North Cork there had for generations existed a feud, such as only regimental tradition now and then perpetuates.

Under such circumstances, especially bearing in mind the Irish temperament, this arrangement as regards quartering was, to say the least of it, an unfortunate one. In any case, the North Cork did not even wait to pay us the proverbial Irish courtesy by inviting us to—"tread on the tail of their coats."

The second evening after our arrival, just as the officers' mess bugle had sounded, we were suddenly confronted with an organised attack in force from our neighbours' lines. The enterprise had evidently been planned in strict secrecy, for we were taken completely by surprise.

The situation had scarcely been realised on our side before our lines were rushed by a large force of the enemy, swarming on to and over the roofs of our huts, smashing windows, doors, furniture, etc., and in an instant a free fight was in progress

in which many heads were broken and some serious casualties suffered by both sides.

It was even said at the moment that two of our men lost their lives, but at this distance of time I am hazy as to whether the rumour was confirmed.

Within a short space of time, luckily, the combatants were overpowered and separated, on the arrival of strong pickets from the rest of the garrison, and thus further damage was averted.

Of course a strict enquiry into the circumstances was held, punishment awarded to those responsible, and drastic measures were taken to prevent a recurrence of the episode, which had narrowly missed developing into a grave military scandal.

Needless to say that among the measures adopted in future a wide interval separated the quarters allotted to the two battalions; but during the field operations which ensued later it must have seriously exercised the ingenuity of the Staff to keep them as far apart from one another as possible.

I have already referred to my stepfather's place, Colworth. Besides containing one of the most important private art collections in England, comprising many well-known historical portraits by celebrated artists of their day, Colworth had a large number of sporting pictures by Stubbs, Constable, and chiefly H. Alken, the last having been a frequent guest there in old Mr. Magniac's time. One of the largest and best sporting pictures I ever saw was at Colworth. It was by H. Alken, depicting a run with the Oakley Hounds, with portraits of men, horses, and hounds.

There was also the set of eight pictures by H. Alken known as the Leicestershire Steeplechase, which was ridden in 1829. Reproductions of these pictures, together with a description of the race, appeared in the *Field* of February 25, 1926, a copy of which I received by the courtesy of Sir Theodore Cook. These pictures, as well as that of the Oakley Hunt which I mentioned before, are still in the possession of my stepbrother, Mr. Oswald Magniac, and I myself have two sets of the coloured engravings of the steeplechase. We boys knew the story of this race by heart, for our old stud groom at Colworth, Henson by name, had, when a lad, saddled for the race Captain Ross's "Clinker," which, having led nearly throughout, fell two fences from home and even then finished fourth in the race.

Colworth lies just on the borders of Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire, and we were thus conveniently placed for meets of the FitzWilliam and Woodland Pytchley as well as the Oakley, in which country we lived. Mr. Magniac's father had formerly been Master of the Oakley for many years, and the sporting traditions of Colworth were well upheld by his son, for my stepfather was one of the hardest riders to hounds I have seen and all my stepbrothers followed his example.

There were, roughly, forty horses in the Colworth stables, and it was possible to hunt six days a week from home. In our time that famous sportsman, Mr. Robert Arkwright, whom we all worshipped, was Master and huntsman of the Oakley, which position he held for approximately forty years.



As we grew up, the Colworth contingent formed a substantial addition to "fields" within reach, where FitzWilliams, Gordons, and large parties from Kimbolton, with many other friends, were out most days. The sporting farmers, who were numerous, all wore blue coats and hunting-caps; many seemed to hunt every day, and I often wondered when they found time to attend to their farms. Some of them dabbled in horse-dealing, and many a good hunter was to be picked up there in those days.

As a sample of a hasty deal a story of the late Lord Spencer, then Master of the Woodland Pytchley, occurs to me. Hounds had run hard for some time over a deep country, the Master was urging his mount painfully over a ploughed field and looking about for his second horseman, when a farmer named Whitehead, who dealt largely in horses, having just found his second horse, came galloping past him. "Whitehead, how much for that horse?" shouted Lord Spencer. "Two hundred and fifty," was the reply. "Get off," said Lord Spencer, and the next minute he was sailing along like a giant refreshed. With such few words is a deal completed when blood is up in the excitement of the chase.

I myself on a smaller scale once concluded a useful purchase somewhat similarly. We were playing a polo match against the Life Guards in Windsor Park. At a critical moment, when our goal was in jeopardy, the pony I was riding got struck on the leg and lamed. My second pony was resting and I looked about me in despair.

A butcher-boy on a likely-looking pony was watching the game. I asked him how much he would take for his pony. He replied, "Twenty-five pounds." I mounted her and finished the quarter on her. She was well bred and fast, and I found her fairly handy considering it was her first experience of polo. She proved a fast trotter in harness ; I drove her tandem, and she once covered the distance between Windsor and Kempton Park in record time.

As soon as I left Eton I had begun studying for the examination for direct commissions in the Army, and when the next examination came off I was lucky enough to be successful. While awaiting a vacancy for a commission in the Coldstream, I went to Hanover and spent some months there studying German. I lived in the house of a Judge, talked German all day, and hired an old gentleman at a thaler an hour to walk out with me daily and tell me the German for everything we met *en route*. I owed much later to these conversations.

## CHAPTER III

### THE COLDSTREAM GUARDS, 1874

#### A RUSSIAN SCARE—A CLIMB INTO THE TOWER—A BREACH OF REGULATIONS

IN January 1874 I was gazetted Sub-Lieutenant in the Coldstream, and joined the 2nd Battalion at Chelsea Barracks; my brother Vesey (now a General) had joined the 1st Battalion in 1871. We were then living at Chesterfield House.

I remember how my pride was hurt on the first day I drove to barracks in uniform, when, no hansom being available, I had to fall back on a decrepit old four-wheeled cab.

I found in barracks, as Orderly Officer, an old school-friend of Cheam days, Lord Douglas Gordon, and reminded him that once when a monitor he had knocked me off a form on which I was standing calling for hisses for the German master, who had offended us. "Briggs," as Douglas Gordon was called, and I became firm friends; he lived in the FitzWilliam country and was a fine rider, and we frequently met out hunting. His early death was a real sorrow to me.

I was taken to the orderly room and there presented to my first C.O., Colonel "Gerry" Goodlake, V.C. I was told his was the first V.C. gained in the Crimea.

From that day onward I set myself to work at the profession I soon learned to love. I think I may say in justice to myself that, with all the

amusement with which I was surrounded, my work was ever foremost in my mind.

While on guard at St. James's Palace I spent many hours with foreign professors and thus laid in a stock of modern languages which was invaluable to me in after-life.

One of the cherished recollections of my early subaltern days is that of meeting at my grandfather's house that popular sportsman and author, Colonel Whyte Melville. He had been in the Coldstream with my father, and, when deploring the early loss of his friend, he spoke of him to my brother and me in terms of the greatest esteem and affection. We were delighted to hear much that interested us of our father, whom I had never seen, from one of his old brother-officers.

He, on his part, seemed pleased to find in us two ardent admirers of his books, with which in our youth we were even more conversant than with those of our other favourites, Surtees and Charles Lever. Of his works, *Digby Grand* and *The Interpreter* appealed specially to us, as we understood they were based on his personal experiences while in the Coldstream.

The absence of the "top boot" which I often observe in pictures of the hunting field nowadays recalls his book of poems, and his lines wherein he prescribes the correct shade of colour for "tops":

"Nor brown nor white,  
But a mixture light  
Of rose leaves and champagne"—

a prescription we endeavoured to follow. *Tempora*



*mutantur*, but it seems sad to observe, both in the hunting-field and in the Row, the dropping of customs regarding dress some of which, surely, had their merits.

Whyte Melville's tragic death in the hunting-field, not long after we met him, of which he gives an almost prophetic description in *Bones and I*, made a deep impression on us at the time.

After a year's service we subalterns attended a garrison course for a year at Wellington Barracks, replacing the course for commissioned officers at Sandhurst which had recently been introduced by Mr. Cardwell, and which had naturally proved most unsatisfactory.

During this course we were inclined to get through the work as superficially as possible. Perhaps London was not a very wise selection for locating a course of study. For work round London, such as surveying, fortification, etc., we used to drive our regimental coaches to the rendezvous, and naturally competition among the regiments ensued as to who got there first. One day when I was driving our regimental coach I remember racing the Blues' coach, driven by Johnnie Kaye, to the "Green Man" at Putney, and a close finish resulted in only one casualty, when my wheel caught a cart laden with protruding baskets in the narrowest part of Putney High Street. Anyhow, the result of the garrison course was rather disastrous, for a large number of the class were spun in the final examination, for which a severe reprimand was issued. I had the luck to take a first class, and thereby got my promotion to Lieutenant with two years' seniority. This en-

couraged me tremendously, and I afterwards went through two courses of Engineering at Chatham. My first experience of the Chatham course tempted me to repeat the dose, and I never regretted the decision. In many ways, I believe, I learnt more practical work there than I found later during the three years passed in connection with the Staff College course.

A proud recollection of my subaltern days is that on two, if not three, occasions it fell to my lot to carry the colour at the "trooping" on the Queen's birthday.

I am not going to inflict on those who may care to read this the routine of a young Guardsman's life in London. I hope to confine these notes to incidents which may perhaps be worthy of interest.

During the Russo-Turkish War in 1878, when it appeared to be possible, even probable, that we might become involved in the struggle, a Guards Brigade was formed, consisting of a battalion from each of the three then existing regiments of Guards, Grenadiers, Coldstream, and Scots Guards.

The Brigade, for training purposes, was sent to Aldershot, and was encamped on the ground then known as the Guards' Enclosure, now the site of Government House and its surroundings. I was at the time reading for the entrance examination to the Staff College, and went with my battalion to Aldershot. Each battalion had been brought up to war strength, 1,000 strong all ranks, and it was generally acknowledged that rarely had so fine a body of men been seen.

By this time General Sir Thomas Steele had left Ireland and had taken over the command at Aldershot.

The Guards Brigade was under the command of Colonel Gipps, Scots Guards (later General Sir Reginald Gipps, Military Secretary at the War Office). The Brigade Staff consisted of Captain the Hon. Everard Primrose as Brigade Major, with North Dalrymple, Scots Guards, and myself as A.D.C.s.

During the time we spent at Aldershot that summer every possible effort was devoted to field training and much good work was put in, for it was considered that at any moment we might again find ourselves at war with Russia.

Sir Thomas, among the many practical measures he introduced during his command at Aldershot, had instituted a series of field-days which were styled "minor operations," in which the whole strength of the Aldershot Division took part. The point about these field-days, at that time I believe an innovation, was the appointment of a Lieut.-Colonel commanding one of the battalions engaged to the supreme command of the contending forces on either side.

The general scheme was drawn up at Headquarters, passed to both the prospective commanders, and the rest was left to them and their staffs to work out. Much useful initiation into staff work and responsibility was thus afforded to those who hitherto had seldom been given the opportunity.

When the turn came to the Guards Brigade to find the Commander for one of the opposing forces,

Colonel Napier Sturt, Grenadier Guards, was selected as being the senior Guardsman commanding a battalion, and he invited me to serve as A.D.C. on his staff during the forthcoming operations. I was thus present at the conclaves which took place previous to the field-day, at which our discussions were ably assisted by Everard Primrose, fresh from the Staff College.

Those who remember Napier Sturt, and his habit of turning everything into a joke, will, I think, agree that at any rate he was no respecter of persons. The knotty points which were frequently raised during these discussions rather bored him, and he eventually decided to seek for further assistance.

There was at that time on the Head Quarters Staff at Aldershot an officer with a great reputation professionally, Colonel Cardew by name. Colonel Sturt at once sent a telegram to Sir Thomas Steele, worded as follows: "Touching this field-day, please send me Cardew or some other wiseacre, for at commanding armies I am as yet a virgin."

I never was able to confirm the truth of it, but rumour credited the General with the following reply: "Keep your virginity, the field-day is postponed."

In any case I can vouch for it that the battle came off some days later than originally proposed, and that, owing to a successful defence of the canal, beyond which we had strongly entrenched ourselves, we, in the language of our Commander, "wiped the floor with the other fellow and knocked him to blazes."



An incident of those days in camp at Aldershot occurs to me as I write. This was the time when, though soldiers were permitted to grow whiskers, efforts were already being made to discourage the practice, but as yet no regulation forbidding it had been published.

Captain Boscawen (the "Star"), Adjutant of my battalion at that moment, had one morning in the orderly room refused an application for leave to grow whiskers. Being himself at the time one of those thus adorned, in the afternoon of the same day he mounted a little platform which he had had constructed in the centre of the camp, where, seated on a chair in full view of the whole battalion, he had his whiskers shaved off.

The Tower of London, in which periodically we were quartered for a year, was a rather dull place for a young subaltern once the interest in its old associations was exhausted. Besides the daily routine work, as our turn came we spent two consecutive days on duty there. The gates were closed at "Last Post," and by 11 p.m. no officer whose name was not down on a list kept at the gate was allowed to enter, while men returning late passed the night in the guard-room until admitted in the morning.

I once had an interesting experience of this custom. I had left the Tower early for a day at Newmarket, having arranged with a brother-officer to put my name down. He forgot to do so. I got back late to London and supped at "Pratt's," where I met George Bouverie, who had recently joined my battalion. Thinking my name was down, we took things leisurely and got

to the Tower about midnight, to find the gates closed. It was snowing hard, we had dismissed our hansom and there was not one to be found. I remembered that I had seen repairs to the wall in progress at the south-east side of the ditch, and I determined to try to climb in.

The sergeant let us down into the ditch, and we started in deep snow northwards (for the river side was too risky), and after successfully negotiating challenges by sentries posted along the ramparts, we arrived at the spot I had noted. Here we scrambled up the rubble as hastily and quietly as possible, only to find the gap filled by a high temporary wooden fence.

I gave Bouverie a leg up, he pulled me up, but just as we sat triumphantly astride the fence an Artillery sentry, whose beat it was, challenged. We both rolled off, happily on the inside of the fence, and lay concealed in the rubble while the sentry prodded it. Luckily he missed us, and, eventually giving it up, he continued his beat. As he turned a corner we bolted into the road, and then, being armed with the "pass-word," we strolled slowly past the sentries and so reached the officers' quarters. When we entered the billiard-room, where some of our brother-officers were still playing, they could not conceive how we had got there, but the plight our clothes were in, all torn and covered with snow, convinced them.

Many years later, when I was Comptroller of the Lord Chamberlain's Department, while explaining to General Sir Hugh Gough, Keeper of the Crown Jewels, some new methods under consideration for safeguarding the entrances to

the Tower, I remarked that it was advisable even to provide against attempts to climb in, an idea which Sir Hugh indignantly repudiated. Taking him aside, I showed him the spot where I had once done so.

It is, however, important to note that only officers known to the garrison could have succeeded as we did.

#### A BREACH OF REGULATIONS

A realistic description of the ceremony of Guard Mounting at Friary Court, St. James's Palace, which appeared in a recent issue of the *Morning Post* reminds me of a rather curious experience I had when Captain of the Queen's Guard which was mounting for duty one morning.

There had been a fall of snow followed by a thaw, which in its turn was succeeded by a hard frost during the night. The result was a veritable condition of *verglas* in the streets, so common in Vienna but luckily almost unknown in London.

It was my first experience of this, and having driven down with my brougham horse well roughed, I marched out with the Guard from Chelsea Barracks without a qualm or a thought of the difficulties which awaited us. These, however, I soon realised, for hardly had we left the Barracks gate 300 yards behind us, when two men had already slipped up and come down, with happily no damage to themselves or their comrades.

I at once halted the Guard and "unfixed bayonets," and for the rest of the march we proceeded gingerly, with as little loss of dignity

as was possible under the circumstances. Even if the band had been able to play while marching, which of course they could not, no one could possibly have kept time to it.

On various occasions men slipped and fell, but we eventually arrived at Friary Court, rather late but without any serious casualties.

The "old Guard" which we were relieving was found by the Scots Guards, under the command of my good friend Lieut.-Colonel Mildmay Willson. The older officers of the Brigade in those days held the double rank, Captain and Lieut.-Colonel.

Having advanced in line and halted facing the old Guard, I bethought me that I might take that opportunity to "fix bayonets" before presenting arms, but the experiences I had gone through on the march decided me that it was safer to take no avoidable risk, and I proceeded with the ceremonial without doing so.

On Mildmay Willson coming forward to hand me the keys he was laughing, and greeted me with, "You are late, and do you know what you have done? You've presented arms with unfixed bayonets." I replied, "Yes, I know." "But," he said, "you can't do it." On that I reminded him that I had just done it, and when I had explained the difficulties I experienced in getting there, he realised the situation and wisely unfixed bayonets before marching off. I knew that my action that morning was a grave breach of regulations, but I consoled myself by the thought that the exercise of common sense under difficult conditions may be considered a palliation even in this respect. And I think I may take it that



the authorities were of the same opinion, for I heard no more of the incident.

The only other occasion on which I remember somewhat similar climatic conditions in London was once when, at a late hour, a merry party was about to sally forth from the Turf Club, and just as we opened the door we got a warning, from our most popular porter Shand, to be cautious, for the pavement was very slippery.

On this we naturally selected and eventually persuaded dear old Christopher Sykes to lead the way, and at the first step his lengthy form lay prone on the pavement.

Amid shouts of laughter from all of us, "Briggs" (Douglas Gordon) followed, by way of showing how careless his predecessor had been, and how it should be done. The same fate at once overtook him, and after hauling in our prostrate friends, the rest of us, consisting of "Brab" (Colonel J. P. Brabazon), "Bully" Oliphant (Colonel, later General, Sir Lawrence Oliphant), John Delacour, and myself, withdrew indoors, and assured Shand we had no intention of forsaking the Club until it thawed.

## CHAPTER IV

### CLUB LIFE IN THE SEVENTIES AND EIGHTIES

IN London at that time the attractions offered by the restaurants had not yet commenced to compete with those of the clubs, and we subalterns foregathered chiefly in the Guards Club.

Although changed conditions, coupled with advancing age, have now for years tended gradually to restrict my experience of club life, I cannot avoid the impression that it had then a greater attraction than it has at present.

Looking back to those far bygone days, it seems to me as if, once clear of the daily routine of duty, we hardly ever ceased laughing and joking ; but that must be, I suppose, the experience of most whose youth has been passed in happy surroundings.

To this day I recall the merry parties which in summer time left the Club after dinner in a procession of hansoms to drive down and dance on the "monster platform" at Cremorne (so called, being the site of our old family residence, Chelsea Farm). I am bound to admit that at times our primary object was to, what we called, "start a row," an amiable intention not difficult to achieve provided only that one collided often enough with the dance officials on the platform, who wore a distinguishing badge with the letters M.C.

One occasion I remember when, having been specially successful in this direction, the situation appeared to be getting serious. Taking advantage of a moment when everyone was occupied arguing, I surreptitiously but hastily quitted the platform, and tore along towards the main entrance, followed by John Hanbury, who, being rather stout, reached it slightly behind me. Successfully evading the officials at the gates, and having negotiated the turnstiles, I raced down the King's Road for all I was worth. There, finding the pursuit to be gaining unpleasantly near, I darted aside and took refuge behind an enormous pump, which in those days stood in a recess to the right not far from the gates. And here I lay *perdu* while the chase, headed by police, went merrily on down the King's Road. I forget what happened to Hanbury; when I last saw him that night he was attempting to surmount the turnstiles, despite the unwelcome attentions of a zealous young constable.

In 1876 Lord Durham kindly proposed me for the Turf Club, in company with his two sons (both brother-officers in the Coldstream) and Harry Tyrwhitt (then in the Grenadiers).

The Turf Club, originally in Arlington Street, and at that time in Grafton Street, was about to be moved to the Duke of Grafton's house in Clarges Street, which had been recently acquired.

From that day until I went abroad in 1890, despite the attractions of the Marlborough and White's, the Turf Club became a second home to me. Indeed, however late the hour, it somehow seemed impossible to go home without turning in

there, for one was certain of finding there many kindred spirits, and what between whist and gossip the time passed most pleasantly, frequently until the early hours of the morning. Among the best whist players of the day who met there were "Russy" Walker, Harry Leeson, and Lord Dupplin, while Lord Russell of Killowen, Sir Henry James, and Lord Hartington were often to be seen there seeking relaxation in a rubber of whist after a hard day's work. When through ill-health my visits to London became every year of rarer occurrence, I recently severed my connection with the Turf Club—a sad wrench after just on fifty years of membership.

Following on "the Bachelors' Ball," which took place in the summer of 1880 at Albert Grant's house, at that time a spacious building standing in extensive grounds in South Kensington, since built over, it was decided to start the Bachelors' Club, and a Committee was formed with the object of furthering the project.

The leading spirit in starting the Bachelors' Club was Augustus Lumley, foremost in the social world, who was then living at 6 William Street, Lowndes Square, a house which I believe then belonged to Mr. William Gillett, also prominent in support of the movement, and the President of the Club for so many years afterwards. It was in William Street that the Committee, of which I was a member, held their meetings and deliberations, the outcome of which is the highly successful and popular Club which has since those days stood at the corner of Hamilton Place.

As the most distinguished bachelor of the day,



the Duke of Albany was invited to be the first President of the Club, which position H.R.H. graciously accepted.

A few days after the Club opened in May 1881 the Duke gave a small dinner there to the Prince of Wales (King Edward) in celebration of the event, at which I was among the half-dozen guests present.

During his bachelor days, and later after he married, I had the honour of frequently meeting the Duke of Albany, and on several occasions he invited me to stay at Claremont. H.R.H. was the most charming host, and I always looked upon Claremont, with its historical memories and its beautiful grounds and park, which might have been hundreds of miles removed from the hurly-burly of London, as the most perfect residence of its kind I ever saw, and I much enjoyed my visits there.

One of the first house-parties the Duke and Duchess gave there after their marriage was for the Derby week at Epsom, to which party I was invited.

The other guests were Lord and Lady Londonderry, Colonel and Mrs. Arthur Paget, and Count Herbert Bismarck. On the Derby day I drove there with the Duchess, Mrs. Arthur Paget, and Count Bismarck.

At the conclusion of the races, when the Duchess had got into her carriage and we were ready to start from the grand-stand, Count Bismarck was missing, and though I hunted for him everywhere and servants were sent in all directions, he could not be found. Just as we

had given him up and the Duchess had decided to start without him, he appeared, breathless and rather overcome by the heat.

The Duchess asked him where he had been, and told him we had looked everywhere for him.

"Ach," he replied, "I have been on the Hill."

On the Duchess, whose first visit to Epsom it was, asking him what was "the Hill," his realistic reply, describing "the Hill" and what he had seen there, was happily not understood by the august personage to whom it was addressed.

It remains in my memory to this day, but discretion precludes its repetition.

It may be only because I am growing old, but in my opinion London was then a more enjoyable place than it is now. There was not the feverish rush that there is to-day, with motors, motor-buses, lorries, and overcrowded streets, and the sense of pandemonium caused by noise and traffic.

Further, in those days, one can truly say, individuals were singled out who led the social world, no matter whether in London, Melton, Newmarket, Cowes, or in country houses. As regards the latter, house-parties for the inside of a week were the custom, instead of the rush for the "week-end" of nowadays. High taxation and death duties are, alas! responsible for the gradual disappearance of the "stately homes" of England, with the country-house life and sport which I found to be the envy of foreigners.

No wonder that in those days individuality came to the front when one predominant figure ruled Society, whose influence made itself felt not only in England, but all over Europe.

I had the honour as time went on to get opportunities both at home and abroad of learning how the personality of the Prince of Wales dominated everyone and everything with which it came in touch, and never, to my knowledge, has that domination been equalled.

Those days of regimental life passed smoothly in a sort of routine which became second life to one, and until I was ordered abroad officially in 1890 I had got into the way of thinking that the only existence possible was consistent with the programme followed by those with whom I spent my time.

## CHAPTER V

### HUNTING

#### KIMBOLTON AND MELTON

To return to hunting. Colworth was within 12 miles of Kimbolton, where the Duke and Duchess of Manchester kept open house practically throughout the winter, and the Duchess was a regular attendant at meets of the Oakley and FitzWilliam. I was often invited there when hounds met in that part of the country.

Thus I enjoyed many a good day's sport from Kimbolton of which I retain the happiest recollections, and the debt of gratitude I owe to my kind hosts there has remained in my memory all my life. The best lady rider to hounds I have ever seen was the Duchess of Hamilton, who passed a large part of the hunting season at Kimbolton.

One day, when I was riding an old mare that had been my first full-sized hunter, the hounds met at Kimbolton, where the Prince of Wales was staying, and H.R.H. was out. Hounds found in the park, and ran in the direction of the Cambridgeshire woods. With a few others I followed them, forgetting the Staughton Brook, and all went well until we came to it. The brook was in heavy flood, but the Whip, who was in front of me, just got over with a scramble, having dropped his hind legs in the water. The only other person in sight was Lord Hardwicke,



then Master of the Buckhounds, who was staying at Kimbolton. With him just behind me I could not hesitate, and so, determined not to disgrace the Oakley in such company, I rammed my mare at the brook. She jumped short and the next minute we were being carried along by the swollen stream. As my mare threatened to sink under me, I slipped off her back and, swimming to the bank, pulled myself out by an overhanging branch; the mare, lightened of my weight, going on gaily down stream, where she was later pulled out. Meanwhile Lord Hardwicke, having enquired as to a bridge, wisely went off to the St. Neots Road. Wet to the skin, with my collar and tie down nowhere, I was glad of a hot bath and refreshment at Kimbolton, after which I started for home clad in the Duke of Manchester's clothes!

But the hunting incident most prominent in my recollections of those days was when the Empress of Austria, then hunting in Leicestershire, was expected out with the FitzWilliam for their Wednesday meet. Her Majesty never came after all; the Crown Prince of Austria, who was staying at Kimbolton, and who had asked permission from Vienna to join the hounds, had received the usual stern refusal. There was an enormous field out, and great crowds on foot which completely spoilt sport in the morning, and early in the afternoon Lord Huntly, the Master, announced his intention of going home. Just as I was starting to return to Kimbolton, Huntly whispered to me, "Stop out; we are going to draw Little Gidding Gorse." I got on

to my second horse and I persuaded one of the Kimbolton party, who by the way only had one horse out, to stay too.

Reduced to a field of about twelve we trotted off and drew the gorse, a fox went away at once, and we started for about the best run I ever saw. When it got dusk we were still going hard, and as we crashed into a high-road, Huntly, who was just on my right, called out, "Help whip off the hounds; it's getting dark and we are just on the edge of the Fens." I had no idea where we were, but in front of me was the G.N.R. line with Holme station near by, and beyond the railway line a bleak, bare extent of fen land, as far as the eye could see. We stopped the hounds just in time and started for a long ride home in the dark on tired horses. General Wilkinson, who had come to Kimbolton to inspect the Duke of Manchester's Light Horse, was with me, and his horse being naturally more done than mine, our pace was slow. It was long after 9 p.m. when we arrived at the Castle. On entering the dining-room, where the large party was still at dinner, we were greeted with various enquiries, and many were the grumbles at having missed the run.

Next morning the Duchess wired to Huntly asking where he meant to draw next Saturday. He replied, "Wherever you like." She answered, "Little Gidding Gorse." I remember ridiculing the idea of finding a fox in a diminutive covert so recently disturbed.

On the Saturday I had the responsibility of piloting a young lady then in the schoolroom,

who, if she ever reads these lines, may possibly remember the incident. As the hounds were put in I took her down near the corner where the fox had broken cover on the previous Wednesday.

To my amazement, a fox bolted immediately at the identical spot, and I called to her to come on, for I believed it to be the same fox. We ran that fox field for field, nearly yard for yard the same line, crossed the railway at Holme station, and about half a mile into the fens the hounds rolled him over.

I shall never forget the appearance of the hounds covered with the black mud of the dykes, nor the strange oaths that issued from the mouth of George Carter the huntsman, as he grasped the fox and shouted to us to come and help him. We could only ride along the embankments which bounded the dykes, and it was no easy matter to cross from one to the other. I remember also to this day the terms applied to us by George Carter regarding the tightness of our boots and breeches, but decency forbids me to repeat them verbatim.

I hope I may be excused the length at which I have recounted this incident, for it has always seemed to me to prove the answer to a vexed question, as to how long it takes a fox to venture back to a covert where he has been disturbed.

During the winter Kimbolton was the scene of many house-parties, and leading statesmen as well as sportsmen were frequent guests there.

I recall an interesting conversation which took place there one night at dinner during the Turco-Russian War. A discussion started as to

the merits of the batteries in the Turkish forts at the Black Sea mouth of the Bosphorus. After some of those present, including Lord Granville, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. "Buckshot" Forster, and, I think, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, had given their opinions, someone turned to Lord Hartington, who had sat silent throughout, and asked his views. "On what?" said Lord Hartington, whose thoughts were possibly on the run we had had out hunting that day. The subject under discussion was explained to him, on which he remarked, "In my opinion, if ever the guns in those forts were fired, they would kill a great many more Turks than Russians."

Shortly afterwards I was at the Staff College, where "Tommy" Fraser (later General Sir Thomas Fraser) was among my fellow students. He was the most prominent Engineer of his day and had recently been some time at Constantinople assisting the Turks to reorganise their defences, and I found that his views amply endorsed those so tersely expressed by Lord Hartington.

Mr. Chamberlain was a frequent guest at Kimbolton in those days. Being on one or two occasions the only other smoker, I have sat up till a late hour in the billiard-room with him, while he consumed many cigars, listening to his kindly explanations on many subjects of which I was ignorant, and I have always been thankful for the opportunities given me then, and later at Chatsworth, of meeting this great statesman.

During the winter of 1882-3 I came in touch with the veteran Field-Marshal Lord Strathnairn, under circumstances which revealed to me some-

thing of the character of this stern and distinguished soldier.

My brother Vesey and I were staying at Wakefield with the late Duke of Grafton, who had been a brother-officer of our father's in the Coldstream, and who used often to talk to us about him.

We had taken our horses to Wakefield, and one night we two were alone at dinner with the Duke previous to hunting with the Grafton hounds the following day.

Soon after dinner had commenced the butler announced that Lord Strathnairn had arrived. The Duke smiled and confided to us that he had not been invited, but that he was in the habit of turning up unexpectedly.

The Field-Marshal soon joined us at dinner, and the Duke informed him we were all going out hunting the next day. "Oh, that's splendid!" said Lord Strathnairn; "I have brought my horses and shall be delighted to join you." On this the Duke told him that he would arrange for him to drive with us to covert. "Thank you, but not necessary," replied Lord S. "I have brought my carriage."

The Duke informed us, *sotto voce*, that such was his custom.

The next day, while hounds were drawing a big wood, the name of which I forget, Lord Strathnairn began questioning me about the campaign in Egypt, from which I had recently returned. His queries were so much to the point, and the conversation so interested me, that for some time I quite forgot about the hounds, until I suddenly



realised that we were alone, and the silence that surrounded us brought it home to me that we had most probably been left behind.

We were at a spot where several "rides" met, right in the centre of the wood, and calling back to the Field-Marshal that the hounds must have gone away, I started off at a gallop down a "ride" in the direction I guessed they must have taken.

On reaching the edge of the wood, to my dismay I saw them streaming away some fields off, hounds evidently running hard. Forgetting all about Lord Strathnairn, I started off to try to get up with them, and was soon after gratified to observe that a check had presumably occurred which might enable me to do so.

After some minutes' hard galloping, during which we negotiated some stiff fences, just as I jumped into a high-road which crossed our line, I heard a crash, and, turning round, was surprised to find the Field-Marshal landing into the road just behind me, if anything rather too close to be pleasant. This was followed immediately by a second crash, and a groom who was riding the second horse, and who must have been as old as his master, came up alongside of us.

We got up with the hounds, but the pace was too good for further conversation, and beyond seeing the Field-Marshal going gallantly for some time, I never set eyes on him again until dinner-time in the evening.

The Grafton had a great run that day. The country was strange to me, but to my surprise I suddenly began to recognise where I was, and

eventually we ran our fox to ground in a small outlying covert on my stepfather's property in the Oakley country. I have of course forgotten the distance of the point, but it was a good one.

My brother reminds me that (during that night at dinner) enquiry as to what had happened to Lord Strathnairn elicited the extraordinary fact that, having got adrift somewhere, he had lost the hounds, but while making the best of his way towards home he had come on another pack of hounds, and had enjoyed a run with them.

It happened to be a Wednesday, when the Oakley did not hunt, but Wednesday was always considered the day for the crack meets of the FitzWilliam round Stanwick Pastures, and the Field-Marshal had by an extraordinary chance fallen in with them.

This episode struck me as a fine performance for a veteran who had played a prominent part and gained such a distinguished record in the Indian Mutiny.

As an amusing sequel to this meeting Lord S. shortly after sent my brother an invitation to dine with him in London, which he gladly accepted. On the night in question Vesey drove to the Field-Marshal's house in Berkeley Square. An astonished servant opened the door, and when Vesey said he had come to dine, he was informed that His Lordship had only a few minutes previously driven off to dine out !

#### MELTON

In those days Melton, where I spent two most enjoyable seasons, was full of good friends and the

most cheery as well as the best hunting quarters in the world. Large studs of hunters were the rule, and my modest one of six or seven the exception. "Buck" Barclay, Alfred Brocklehurst, Portland (under whose hospitable roof I spent most of one season), George Lambton, "Polly" Carew, Hughie Owen, Roddy Owen, Arthur Coventry, and old Tom Boyce, were amongst the many friends with whom one passed one's time.

"Doggy" Smith was then admittedly the finest rider to hounds in Melton. One day riding home from hunting he and I discussed the future life. He told me that his idea of heaven was that we should all pass our time doing what best we loved on earth. "We shan't all play harps," he said; "for my part, I expect I shall hunt six days a week in the best grass country imaginable, mounted on my old favourites."

At that time it became the fashion to drive to covert with fast ponies, George Lambton being the exception, for he always stuck to hacking to covert.

There was also a gallant contingent from Austria-Hungary, Charles Kinsky, "Gieschy" Kaunitz, Heine Larisch, and other good sportsmen. Kaunitz was a bold, rash rider to hounds. Once, in a run with the Belvoir, soon after leaving covert, with hounds running hard, I espied the willows of the Whissendine in front. I called out to Kaunitz, who was on my left: "Look out, you can't go there." "No, but I will try," he shouted back, and the next moment he cleared the fence on the take-off side and went souse into the water.

While hunting at Melton I found quite by chance the best hunter I ever rode in my life. Gerald Paget, with whom I was then staying at North Lodge, asked me to try a horse he wanted his wife to ride, but he was afraid it pulled too hard for a lady, while not being up to his weight. We were out next day with the Belvoir, and in the afternoon as we drew a small covert on the side of a slope I got on the horse. I had gone down to the bottom of the slope, while most of the large field remained at the top. A fox went away at the lower end of the covert and only some twenty of us got away with the hounds for about a five-mile point of the best of the Belvoir vale. The further we went the bigger the fences became, and the better my horse jumped. When we ran the fox to ground, I felt I was mounted on *the* one that was fittest for further effort.

That night at dinner Gerald enquired about the horse, and I said he pulled terribly. "Ah," said he, "I feared so." Then I told him: "I'm not going to humbug you; he's the best horse I ever rode. Will you sell him?" He refused. A week later I had been disappointed about a horse I was trying to buy, and Gerald walked into my room and said, "Look here, that horse you rode. I gave £40 for him to go in the brougham. Will you give me £250 for him?" I said, "Yes." He was rather sore he hadn't asked more for him, which I should certainly have given him.

Charlie Beresford had just bought another horse from Gerald, his brother-in-law, and that night at

dinner we disputed which had the best, and the natural result was that we arranged a match to be ridden over the Burton Flats. As I knew that Charlie's horse made a noise, I told him on reflection that it wasn't fair, and we compromised by settling that it should be a “pounding match.” Unfortunately the match never came off, for the week before the date fixed on I staked my horse out with the Quorn. By the by, Charlie always said that when on a horse he had “the firm hand and the loose seat of the British sailor.”

It was during the winter 1883-84 that I bought this horse, and at the close of that season a point-to-point race for officers of the Brigade of Guards, an idea which had long been discussed, was arranged to take place. The race was to be run over the Meynell country and I entered “Dragoman,” as I called him. I had often hunted with the Meynell and loved the country, and I induced some of the Melton sportsmen at times to train to Derby for a day with the Meynell, where the open brooks brought many from Leicestershire to grief.

For the race we started sixteen, over a country which for clean fences and landing could not be beaten. The course was a four-mile point with an open brook for the finish. To make a long story short, “Dragoman” won by a length with a bit to spare, a horse of Mildmay's (Grenadiers), which had never been beaten before, being second, while two Coldstreamers, Lambton and Codrington (since both Generals), were third and fourth. Thus of the first four three were Coldstreamers.

Before leaving Windsor I had promised my



C.O. (Colonel Wigram) to telegraph him the result of the race. His reply to my wire acquainting him with the result, "Bravo, you are indeed *facile princeps*," made me the proudest man in England that day. The cup I won—a copy of the Warwick Vase—is among my most valued possessions.

The following summer, when I sent my horses up to Tattersall's, I am sorry to say that, owing to a "bad Ascot" the week before, I had to withdraw the big reserve I had put on "Dragoman," with the result that, in spite of a doubt as to his wind on the part of Williams, the vet., he was knocked down for 380 guineas to George Wickham of the Blues. During next season he went in his wind and was sold to go in the Brighton coach!

Alas! when I heard this sad news I was out in the Soudan on the Nile Expedition. I cabled home as soon as I could to buy him back, but all efforts to find him were unsuccessful, and to my grief I never saw again the best hunter I have ever ridden.

When during the hunting season I was honoured with an invitation to Sandringham, I was on several occasions given a mount for a day with the West Norfolk Hounds.

I recall an incident when Fountaine, the Master, having told me he thought it no use our stopping out (for he doubted our chances of finding another fox that day), we started off for a "lark home" headed by Harry Chaplin, who took a toss out of a lane, the first obstacle we came to! Luckily no damage was done, and having caught his horse

for him we settled down and for some distance we all enjoyed it immensely. But the fun was marred by what might have been a serious accident to one of the young princesses, who was near me, somewhat to the left of the rest of the party. Just as we approached a wattle fence I saw a wide ditch on the landing side, and shouted to warn her. Her horse just jumped short, caught his toes on landing, and rolled over her. For some time things looked serious, but we were able to get her home and happily no bad results ensued from what was undoubtedly a very nasty fall, and I have never forgotten the shock it gave me at the time.

## CHAPTER VI

### NEWMARKET—THE ISLAND OF ARRAN

I WAS lucky enough to be one of four who, though not members of the Jockey Club, were allowed to have a room in The Rooms at Newmarket. Oliver Montagu, "Bully" Oliphant, and Harry Hungerford shared this privilege with me. A *gîte* in these most comfortable quarters where one could go and stay at any time, irrespective of race weeks, for a change, was a great boon. The one drawback to living in the rooms was the late hours it entailed, for going up to bed one had to pass the card-room, and the attractions of a rubber of whist were hard to resist; possibly it would have been worse in these days of bridge.

When I was suddenly sent to Austria, about the worst pang I had was parting with my room there. For the life at Newmarket then was truly an ideal one. What with watching the gallops in early morning, and seeing the racing later on a hack, for in those days nearly everybody rode during the races, it was a fine, healthy existence. The ladies who attended the racing in those days could be counted on one's fingers, and it was quite an ordeal for a new-comer to venture into the hallowed precincts of their stand.

Among the ladies the most regular attendants were the Duchess of Montrose, the

Duchess of Manchester, Mrs. Monty Tharp, and Lady Cardigan, the last-named often hacking. The Duchess of Montrose was indeed the hostess *par excellence*, both at Newmarket and at Ascot, at which latter she always rented a house for the race week, and where I was several times invited to join her parties. General conversation, which I found in France the rule and in England the exception, was always encouraged by our hostess, herself the life and soul of her parties, which, including as they did such men as Marcus Beresford, Freddy Johnstone, Randolph Churchill, Charles Kinsky, John Delacour, Harry Tyrwhitt, etc., made a certainty of an enjoyable week.

I trust it may not be considered superfluous if I here record my personal experiences of events already most fully described by Mr. K. M. Humphris, in his interesting *Life of Fred Archer*. I refer to the race for the Cambridgeshire in 1886.

The Duchess of Montrose had fancied her horse St. Mirin for the race and it was hoped he might be ridden by Archer. A recent trial with his stable companion Carlton, belonging to the Duke of Beaufort, had advanced the latter in the betting, while St. Mirin proportionately receded.

The week before the Cambridgeshire, between two Newmarket meetings, I spent in Ireland, staying with Lord and Lady Londonderry for the meeting at the Curragh. Lord Londonderry had entered his horse Cambusmore for the Lord-Lieutenant's Plate, and Archer was to ride him.

Going on board the night boat at Holyhead, I met Archer, and during a calm passage across

I spent some time walking the deck with him. Among other things, we discussed the prospects of the Cambridgeshire, and, to my surprise, I found Archer still sanguine about the chances of St. Mirin in spite of the trial. When I mentioned it, he professed scepticism of reports of a trial which had taken place on, as he said, "a very foggy morning." I mentally registered this significant tip.

That week Archer's presence at the Curragh aroused immense enthusiasm among the sporting Irish public, and his reception in Ireland evidently made a great impression on him.

Just before the race for the Lord-Lieutenant's Plate I was standing near the gate of the paddock as he passed out on Cambusmore, and he bent down and murmured to me, I thought rather nervously, "I would rather win this race than next year's Derby."

His return to the paddock after Cambusmore's victory was the occasion for an ovation which must have gratified even him, accustomed as he was to many similar experiences in England.

The next week, on the evening before the Cambridgeshire, I was one of a party dining with Lord Hartington in his house at Newmarket.

The Prince of Wales was present.

After dinner, while we were playing cards, Harry Leeson said to the Prince across the table, "Sir, there's a horse in the race to-morrow which, though a rank outsider, I think you would not like to let run unbacked, for he is called The Sailor Prince, after your Royal Highness's brother."



So far as I remember, the remark was generally received with more amusement than interest.

The next day, a short time before the race, I backed St. Mirin at 10 to 1, to win what was for me a good stake, saving myself for a place.

When nearing the finish the field, with one exception, was in the centre and on the near side of the course, St. Mirin very well placed ; and going strong enough to stave off an effort by Melton, he certainly flattered his backers.

Hardly anyone noticed a horse running by himself near the rails on the off side of the course. Just as they passed the post, I caught sight of this horse alone on the far side, and, though most of those near me thought St. Mirin had won, I waited anxiously to see the numbers go up. Such, for the moment, was the belief in St. Mirin's victory, that Soveral, who had been with me when I backed him, was even congratulating me, when The Sailor Prince's number went up. I afterwards heard that the judge said it was the shortest “ head ” he had ever given.

Harry Leeson's remark, above mentioned, proved not to be without result, at any rate in one instance. After the race it appeared that one lady at least who was present when the remark was made had backed the winner. As I was often entrusted with making bets for her, and sometimes when in a hurry laid the odds myself to the very small amounts involved, I was pleased to think that on this occasion I had not been asked to do the commission.

Undoubtedly the disappointment over a race he had evidently set his heart on winning, coupled

with excessive wasting in order to ride the weight, combined to bring on the illness which in a few weeks proved fatal for poor Archer.

In any case, whatever may be said of the way the race was ridden, the few words I had with him after it (alas ! the last I ever exchanged with this marvellous jockey and attractive personality) led me to infer that, not seeing Sailor Prince, Archer thought that when he had disposed of Melton he had won the race.

For some reason St. Mirin must have been in my mind previous to the events recorded above.

One morning at breakfast—it may have been the first day of the first October meeting, or earlier that autumn—I told the Duchess that during the night I had dreamt that I saw St. Mirin win the Derby, at which, the Derby being past history, everyone was much amused. When the laughter caused by my announcement subsided, the Duchess remarked that she didn't think the dream so absurd as it seemed, for St. Mirin was entered in a race called the Newmarket Derby. Not fancying him for it, she had no intention of running him, but that now she should certainly let him take his chance.

By the courtesy of Messrs. Weatherby I am confirmed in my recollection that St. Mirin won the Newmarket Derby on October 15, 1886.

Of all my pleasant memories of Newmarket in those days, one cold, dark morning of an October meeting specially comes back to me. I was returning on my pony from looking at the gallops, when I met Captain Machell, looking very cold and smothered in a big muffler. He asked if I

had seen his horses anywhere, and I told him they were the other side of the Ditch. He kindly invited me to come and see them, and I turned back with him. We spent some time watching the string at exercise, while the Captain gave me the history of each one and his expectations regarding them. One, a big, overgrown two-year-old, he described as wanting time to develop, and he said he should only bring him out late next season, "but," he added, "I think he will be heard of about the time of the Leger."

This horse became the property of my friend Lord Rodney, and when the following autumn Kilwarlin won the Leger starting at a good price I had good reason to bless my meeting with the Captain that morning.

I venture to mention this proof of his judgment, with apologies to those whose experiences on this subject are really worth recording.

By the time I returned home after twelve consecutive years passed abroad I had "lost touch," and have never been to Newmarket since.

I have many pleasant recollections of happy days passed in the island of Arran during the seventies and eighties, with my kind hosts and best of friends the Duke and Duchess of Hamilton.

The sport there, stalking and grouse shooting, was, I venture to think, unsurpassed in those days.

The Duke never favoured grouse driving, and the shooting was done entirely over dogs, in parties of two guns; while the stags for heads and weight were, I believe, a record.

It was said that a stag killed there by Oliver Montagu had turned the scale at 32 stone, but I must confess that in this instance I heard doubts expressed as to the manner of weighing.

By chance I have just come on an old game-book I kept recording the sport there in 1878 between August 12 and 29, where I find stated that on August 21 "Polly" Carew (later General Sir Reginald Pole Carew) killed two stags weighing respectively 23 st. 4 lb. and 22 st. 11 lb., while the bag between the dates mentioned totalled just over 2,700 grouse. I remember being told that one season after we had left the island the keepers accounted for another 2,000 head of grouse.

An incident which occurred one Sunday while we were at Dubhgharadh, the Gaelic name for the shooting-lodge on the west side of the island, offers such a striking example of the rigid adherence to the observance of the Sabbath (handed down by generations in Scotland) as to seem worth recording.

During luncheon that day a discussion arose regarding the sight of a rifle which belonged to one of the party. After luncheon a visit to the gun-room, some short distance from the house, was proposed, and we walked across there. Besides our host the party consisted, I think, of "Curly" Knox (Colonel Knox, Scots Guards), "Polly" Carew, Earlie (Lord) Clonmel, and myself.

The rifle in question was taken out of the gun cabinet by its owner, I believe Colonel Knox, who handed it to Hamilton and was just explaining to him the merits of the sights when Mr. Mac-

kenzie, the head stalker, came into the room. He strode straight up to Hamilton, saying, "Your Grace, how dare you take a rifle out on the Sabbath! You desairve never to kill another stag as long as you live."

With that he snatched the rifle out of Hamilton's hands, locked it up in the cabinet, put the key in his pocket, and left the room.

He was gone before we had time to realise the situation ; but when we did, any feeling of resentment which found expression among us was laughed off at once by our kindly and ever-genial host.



## CHAPTER VII

### STAFF COLLEGE, 1879-1881

So far as I can remember, it was in the early winter of 1878 that, more in a spirit of pique than from any other incentive, the idea came to me to compete for the next entrance examination for the Staff College. Till then, I believe, the only Guardsmen who had gained the "p.s.c." were General William Fielding, Coldstream Guards, and Colonels George Villiers and Everard Primrose, Grenadier Guards. The two latter had been Military Attachés at Berlin and Vienna respectively, and their example fired my ambition for a similar career. The study of Continental Army Organisations, for which I felt my knowledge of languages would be of use, attracted me immensely.

It happened that about November 1878 Edward Digby (afterwards Lord Digby) resigned the adjutancy of the 2nd Battalion, to which I belonged. I wrote at once from Colworth, where I was hunting at the time, to ask my Commanding Officer, Colonel Arthur Fremantle, to consider me for the vacant adjutancy. He replied regretting that he thought I was too fond of hunting, and that he intended giving the adjutancy to Arthur Henniker, a subaltern junior to me (later General the Hon. A. Henniker-Major). To this I replied asking my C.O.'s permission to go

up for the next entrance examination for the Staff College. The required permission was at once granted, but I could see that my C.O. was sceptical as to my chances of success in the entrance examination.

In those days twenty vacancies were offered per annum to the whole Army at home and abroad, of which five were reserved for Artillery and Engineers.

On receiving Colonel Fremantle's consent, I at once sent all my hunters up for sale except one (a horse called The Parson, which I had bought from a clergyman in the Quorn country), and I went to live at Sunbury, to work under Captain Lendy, the famous Army crammer of those days. I had there as a welcome colleague Ivor Herbert, of the Grenadier Guards (afterwards Major-General and M.P., now Lord Treowen). With his companionship and that of his charming wife my time went happily, and I was aided very considerably in my studies by the presence of a brother Guardsman.

Looking back at those days when a Guardsman candidate for the Staff College was a *rara avis*, it is hard nowadays to conceive the criticism with which I had to put up. On my complaining to my C.O., Fremantle's successor, that the entrance examination was fixed for the week after Ascot, all the comfort I got was, "My dear boy, if you will go in for this sort of thing, you must expect to have to do with people who don't understand the ordinary pursuits of a gentleman."

I was just then the subject of much good-humoured chaff from my brother-officers in the

Guards Club. My friend Douglas Gordon was specially critical, but when at last I told him to take his own line and leave me to mine, he admitted I was right and wished me every possible success. My hunting now was confined to one day a week with the Queen's Staghounds, when I gave myself a holiday from Sunbury.

Once when I appeared at a meet near Windsor the Prince of Wales (King Edward) was out, and on seeing me H.R.H. called me up and said, "What are you doing here? I thought you were one of those smart young men who only hunt in the Shires." I replied that I was cramming at Sunbury for the Staff College, and had sold my horses, barring the one I was riding. On that the Prince at once became serious, praised me for my decision, said it was a most laudable ambition, and hoped I would later "be rewarded by a good Staff appointment."

Then occurred an incident I would fain record as an instance of the marvellous memory the Prince possessed. He asked me when the entrance examination took place. I told him rather ruefully that it was fixed for the week after Ascot, and he smiled. This conversation took place early in January.

By the time Ascot week arrived in June I was "fed up" with work and decided that a week's relaxation on the race-course before the examination would clear my brain. I went to Ascot, and when the Prince saw me in the Enclosure he beckoned to me and said, "You should not be here. I thought you told me that examination took place next week." I stammered out my

explanation and excuse, and with that inimitable smile which ever endeared him to everyone who had the honour of meeting him, he set my mind at rest, and again wished me success in what was before me. I had luck in the examination and was able to hold my own sufficiently to pass in, though I must confess I was not a very long way from the last of the successful ones.

I cannot even remember in what month we joined the Staff College, but from then onward I commenced a life of strenuous work which continued long after I had left the Army.

Looking back, I wonder whether others have shared my experience. With the conceit of youth I used to criticise the system of education, the curriculum, and, above all, the lack of encouragement given to ambition. What seemed to me to call for careful consideration was the principle which favoured the "mark catcher" in examinations, in comparison with qualifications gained by all-round experience, including active service. It was impossible to avoid comparing the list of graduates of the Staff College with that of the successful officers of those days. As an example of what I mean, I quote the case of an officer with a most distinguished record of active service who wrote to me while at the Staff College to ask me whether I could persuade my colleagues to allow him to attend the classes and lectures there, although he had not passed the entrance examination. On taking a vote among my fellow students, I found them almost unanimously against consent, which decision, with great regret, I had to convey to my friend. That

officer later rose to the rank of Field-Marshal. I am glad to say that, very soon after, provision was made to meet such cases.

I hold that the system of education then in force was largely responsible for the rather limited proportion of officers with the p.s.c. certificate who rose to distinction in after-life. For though we certainly had then at the College some of the most "brainy" and cleverest officers of the Army, from whom one looked for great things hereafter, such expectations were only partially fulfilled.

I was honoured by being closely questioned on several occasions by H.R.H. the Commander-in-Chief as to conditions at the Staff College, and possibly in some small way my reports received consideration. One day at Goodwood, when conversing with the Duke on the subject, I mentioned the case of a great friend of mine, a cavalry officer who, under the Mastership of Major Leir (now General Leir Carleton), was joint Whip with me of the Staff College Dragoon-hounds. He was one of the finest riders I have seen, and a hard-working ambitious soldier. This officer had just failed by a few marks to pass the first yearly examination and was not permitted to remain for the second year of the course. As I told the C.-in-C. that day, had he even been allowed fifty marks for his riding he would have pulled through on the total, but in those days no marks were allowed for riding.

A card I have on my table as I write records a welcome change as regards these conditions. It is the race-card of the Staff College point-to-point



meeting this very week at Hawthorn Hill. Six races, entries well filled, and I am told riding good. This is surely a proof that nowadays common sense prevails, and riding counts for something.

I myself had a curious experience in that first yearly examination. I narrowly missed sharing the same fate as my Cavalry friend. Fond of languages and with an eye to my future career, on entering the College I took up Russian, and the Russian professor there was extremely pleased with the progress I made. The standard in mathematics was a pretty high one. I was never very apt or keen on this subject ; nor did I expect that an advanced education therein would be of use to me in after-life. In this first yearly examination I failed in mathematics by 13 marks. The Commandant sent for me. " You have failed in the examination," he said. I replied, " I beg your pardon, sir, I have passed." He said, " Oh, you count those ridiculous foreign languages," and I ventured to explain that I certainly did and that with the marks I had gained in them on the total I had passed with a wide margin. He there and then rated me soundly, said he had his eye on me, that I was too fond of going on leave, and he warned me that if at the end of the second year in the final examination I did not pass in mathematics he would have no mercy on me and would spin me on the total, whatever it was. If this came about it meant the loss of three years' hard work, and to the regret of the professor I had to give up Russian and devote myself to mathematics, in

which subject I just squeaked through in the final examination.

Now, I hold that I should have been allowed to follow my special hobby. Russian would have been invaluable to me in after-life, whereas the mathematics I learned during those two years were practically useless to me and I forgot most of it in a short time. On leaving the College I took up Turkish, thinking it easier than Russian and likely to be equally useful, but by then I had very little spare time at my disposal.

As a proof of the little encouragement given, I have just looked through a portfolio containing my sketches and reports during my two years' course, maps made in connection with the schemes set us by our excellent instructor in surveying, Colonel Richardson. Though I say it, they strike me as proofs of careful, neat, and conscientious work, yet never a one had ever obtained a word of recognition; a pencil note scrawled untidily across them, curt, ungraciously worded, and finding fault on some unimportant detail, is all that I could see where I sought for some appreciation in high quarters.

I am glad to have often received direct evidence from officers who have since been through the course showing how in these days conditions have been altered, and it is gratifying to know that our experiences of those days were succeeded by the introduction of drastic changes in the right direction.

I made friends with Captain Brooks, the riding master at Sandhurst, where we Staff College officers attended Riding School. He was a well-

known character, fond of forcible language, and he “cottoned” to me because on arrival I asked him if I might use my own plain flap saddles instead of the uncomfortable military saddle provided. One day he warned me to look out for trouble when we were cantering round the school without stirrups and “reins down.” Sure enough that morning, as we were all at the canter he suddenly called “’Alt.” As if shot, the old school horses, educated to the voice, stopped dead short and I should be afraid to say how many of the Staff College “went on.” I have little doubt that the name of Captain Brooks lives to this day in the Riding School at Sandhurst, if only for the caustic humour of his remarks on the riding of those under his instruction.

During my time there I instituted an annual racket match between the Staff College officers and Sandhurst cadets. The first year “Curly” Hutton (afterwards General Sir Edward Hutton) and I met two boys who had just played for their respective schools, Eton and Winchester, and we were proud to beat them, though we began badly, losing the first game. When the time came for the match the following year Hutton had gone to South Africa, and I regret to say that the Staff College, represented by two Coldstreamers—for Codrington of my regiment (now General Sir Alfred Codrington) had by that time joined us—suffered defeat.

The Commandant at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, kindly allowed me to take part in the polo which was started then among the cadets, and I had the pleasure of playing

with the team of Sandhurst cadets in several matches against regiments at Aldershot and elsewhere. Being young for a Staff College officer (I passed out at twenty-seven), I was sometimes able to pose successfully as a cadet.

On one occasion after a match on the Sandhurst ground against the 3rd Battalion Grenadiers then quartered at Aldershot, which event was largely attended by the élite of the neighbourhood, just as I was starting to ride back to the Staff College I was sent for by the Commandant. I found the General seated with his wife and family in the middle of a circle of spectators. I was very pleased with myself, for we had won the match. The General, however, rather damped my ardour when he said, "Mr. Dawson, I wanted to tell you how pleased I am that you should help my cadets with their polo. So long as they can afford it, I think it a first-rate game for future officers. But I must ask you to moderate your language!" I could have sunk into the earth. I tried to excuse myself, saying that while playing back I sometimes got rather excited and had no idea what I said. His reply was worded very kindly, but gave me to understand that my language during the last hour would not bear repeating anywhere, least of all within the precincts of the Royal Military College. Thereafter, as it may be imagined, I kept a careful guard on my tongue.

One of our tasks was the survey of long road routes on horseback, and on these occasions I often rode my polo ponies. One day, while on a narrow canal bridge, I was trying to take an angle through the prismatic compass on my best pony,

by name Lucy Glitters, and just as I gently reproved her for refusing to stand still, I heard a voice say, " Shall I hold her for you, Douglas ? " I dropped the compass and saw before me ———, late of the Life Guards, whom I had not set eyes on for some years. He had been one of the best-looking, best-known, and most popular men in London, and we used to play rackets together at Prince's. I was grieved to see how " down in the world " he looked. We talked some time together, he told me of his troubles, and I parted from him very sad at heart. I never saw him again, but was glad to learn quite recently that his bad times were only of short duration.

On leaving the Staff College I went through the usual courses, being attached to the other arms, which occupied another year of my life. The Cavalry regiment to which I was attached was the 4th Hussars, later commanded by my dear old friend " Brab " (Colonel J. P. Brabazon), where I was most warmly received and acquired much useful knowledge ; while when after six months with the Cavalry I went to the Artillery I found as my C.O. that gallant gentleman General Albert Williams, with whom I was later frequently associated, for he was one of the favourites on the Staff of the Duke of Cambridge.

Much as I disliked the restraint of the Staff College and fretted against what I then considered to be useless labour, I never regretted my time there with the invaluable experience it gave me, and I considered it to have been the making of whatever career I was to be favoured with.



Undoubtedly the p.s.c. certificate which I gained in 1881 was responsible for my being picked out by Lord Wolseley for special service in campaigns in 1882, 1884, and 1885, and for the friendship and favour shown me in those and later days by distinguished officers like Brackenbury, Buller, and Evelyn Wood. To my great disappointment, circumstances (referred to elsewhere) precluded me seeing active service later in South Africa, and again during the Great War.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE TAKING OF CAIRO, SEPTEMBER 1882

BEFORE recording what follows I may here state that these memoirs make no pretence to give a detailed consecutive story of campaigns now ancient history, which have already been described by those far more competent to do so, and of which, moreover, the interest they aroused at the time has since been largely discounted by the Great War.

My intention in writing is to confine myself to dealing with experiences when occasion brought me in personal touch either with events which seem to be of general interest, or with individuals whose names in those days spoke for themselves.

When war with Egypt broke out in 1882 I was in Canada with the Governor-General. We had just returned from a fishing expedition on the Cascapedia, when I received in Quebec a cablegram telling me that Sir Garnet Wolseley had selected me for special service in Egypt, and that two horses had already been sent out for me. Luckily that morning a ship was lying under the Citadel, just about to start for Liverpool. I left at once, and with a short day in London made, I believe, a record journey from Quebec to Alexandria.

On arrival in London I learnt that my battalion, 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards, then quartered

in Dublin, was leaving Kingstown Harbour the next morning for Alexandria. I was thus just in time to embark with them.

From Alexandria we went on to Ramleh, where we remained a short time facing Arabi's force, which was holding the narrow neck of land north of Kafr-Duar.

How the fleet and land forces combined, suddenly and secretly concentrated in Aboukir Bay, once there to open sealed orders, and how the Suez Canal was seized, in spite of protests by M. de Lesseps, are matters of history.

The long line of alternate battle- and troop-ships, as we steamed past Port Said and entered the Canal, was a sight that no one who witnessed it could ever forget.

When we reached Ismailia I was lucky enough to be appointed at once by Sir Garnet to the command of a troop of Mounted Infantry, under Colonel Hallam-Parr, then posted at Kassassin and the coveted service at that moment, for it was on its trial; we had every opportunity of showing what could be made of it, and I thus gained a most interesting experience. Hallam-Parr had only just taken over the command of the M.I. from my old friend "Rolly" Melgund (afterwards Lord Minto), who had been wounded. Parr was the beau-ideal of a M.I. commander, and we in the Corps experienced a sad loss, in more ways than one, when he in his turn left us on being wounded.

Among the comrades I had in our cheery mess at Kassassin were Alderson, Hore, Lawrence, and others whose names were later distinguished

in the annals of the M.I. ; while I had in my own troop two most gallant civilians, " Sankey " Herbert and Barttelot. The former, a protégé of Sir Garnet Wolseley, though a civilian, had as a volunteer already seen much fighting, his experience was wide ; his personal courage remarkable, almost to a fault ; and at times I had the greatest difficulty in restraining the ardour of my two subalterns, for Barttelot was equally rash. He was afterwards killed in Africa while with Stanley in the Livingstone Expedition. I retain to this day feelings of the warmest affection and respect for both of them, and of gratitude for the opportunity given me of serving with two such gallant gentlemen.

For the assault on the position at Tel-el-Kebir, September 13, the Mounted Infantry was attached to the Cavalry Division under General Drury Lowe.

Our rôle consisted in getting round during the night to the rear of the enemy's position, and before the dawn broke we were well posted to intercept the enemy's forces, which covered the desert in disordered flight the moment the position was carried. I shall never forget the long line of fire, extending for some miles, which broke the silence and semi-darkness as the moment arrived which we had anxiously awaited, and the enemy awoke to realise the situation.

After rounding up large numbers of the routed Egyptians and capturing many prisoners and guns, the Division started at once for Cairo. Our force, at starting, consisted of the Household Cavalry Regiments, the 4th Dragoon Guards,

two Indian Cavalry Regiments, the Mounted Infantry, and Artillery.

Owing to the deep sandy going the guns and some of the Cavalry were outpaced on the march, and the force which first reached Cairo consisted of the 4th Dragoon Guards, the Indian Cavalry, and Mounted Infantry.

Towards evening on the second day of a forced march we sighted Cairo, and simultaneously a huge camp came into view on our right flank. To me, at any rate, this was the first intimation of what forces still remained at Arabi's disposal after the rout at Tel-el-Kebir. Much excitement, beating of drums, and blowing of trumpets ensued at the sight of us by the occupants of the camp, and we momentarily expected to be attacked, but evidently the lesson already taught had gone home and we continued our advance towards the city unmolested. As we drew up facing the outskirts, Herbert Stewart approached me saying, "Dawson, the Mounted Infantry have borne the burden all through; you can come with me into the city, where I am going to demand the surrender of Cairo." I have ever since regretted that it never struck me to borrow someone's horse and go with him. Both the horses I had brought out from England had been wounded, and the poor beast I rode in the march had gone practically on three legs throughout. I asked Stewart if we should have to trot, as I feared my mount had about reached the end of his tether and couldn't keep it up any further. He replied that to make a show in the streets we must keep up a smart trot, and thus I lost



my chance. We waited some considerable time before Stewart returned; when he did he announced that Arabi had surrendered the city and had been made a prisoner. We got the order to advance. At once I gave the word to my troop "Walk march," as I was determined we should be "first in." It has always been a subject of friendly rivalry between us of the M.I. as to who actually first entered the city, but I flatter myself in this respect. Two troops on my left moved off when I did, one of M.I. and one of 4th Dragoon Guards under Captain Darley. They broke into a trot. I followed suit with my men, and I remember giving a triumphant wave of the hand as, in spite of my three legs, we stumbled over a low mud wall at the boundary of the city.

We made straight for the Kasr-el-nil Barracks, where a much-needed rest and food were given horse and man. But as night came on Darley and I were both aroused by an order to proceed with our men at once and demand the surrender of the Citadel.

It was pitch dark as Darley and I rode off together at the head of our men, accompanied by two Egyptian officers acting as guides. The chances of treachery on their part impelled us to ride with revolvers pointed at close range the whole way. We had chosen the desert route as preferable to the streets, and we passed a cemetery which I could just discern in the darkness, and which I learnt afterwards to be the Tombs of the Caliphs. We arrived at last at the entrance to the Citadel on the summit of the steep hill. Here

we found the massive gates closed, bolted, and barred. In response to a violent battering, the gates were opened after some delay, and we were confronted by an officer in command of his guard. We told him we had orders to demand the surrender of the Citadel, and he replied he must take our message to the Governor. Our total strength cannot have been much over 200, and in the light of later knowledge I always think our bluff worthy of the finest poker player, for there turned out to be a large garrison in the Citadel.

After a long delay the Governor's reply came, to the effect that he was ready to hand over the Citadel to us on condition that his force was allowed to march out under arms. I demurred to the arms being taken, and we sent for instructions from the General. He gave the required permission, and in a short time the garrison began to march out through the gates.

By that time I was riding one of the Cyprus ponies supplied for my men, for my horse was practically finished. My astonishment at the numbers which continued to pour out of the gates was great, but fatigue gradually overcame me to such an extent that I dismounted and am ashamed to say lay down in the road and in one minute I was fast asleep. When some little time after I awoke, the Egyptian troops were still passing out. At length came the rear of the column, and we then rode in with our detachment. Here we found the place in a state of chaos and indescribable filth. There were, it seems, about 500 of the worst criminals in Egypt

imprisoned in the Citadel ; the prisons had been opened and the prisoners were trying to escape in all directions.

Darley and I spent some hours dealing with them, but at length we got control of the situation, having posted a line of sentries all round the walls of the Citadel at points whence a fair view could be obtained of any further attempts at escape.

Some time in the small hours, by which time chaos had been replaced by some semblance of order, Darley came to me and said he had found a room with a huge four-post bed in it which he believed to be the Governor's. It was many weeks since we had had a chance of such a luxury; we turned, heads and tails, into what looked like the most welcome bed we had seen for a long time, and in a minute or so were both sleeping peacefully. ✨ Alas ! our comfort was almost at once disturbed ; we were being devoured by bugs and began kicking in all directions, which, as we were both booted and spurred, decided us to seek other quarters.

As day broke we were again busy getting some sort of order in the place, and I saw some of the most horrible sights I have ever witnessed. Nearly all the prisoners had at one time or another been victims of the bastinado ; some had had their eyes gouged out with hot irons, and many were chained by the legs together in couples with a big cannon-ball attached between them. I saw one poor man, with practically no soles to his feet, blind of both eyes and chained to another man. His companion kept

pulling him up on to his back to move him into the shade as the fierce rays of the sun pursued them round the corner of a wall where they lay.

While walking with a sergeant across a yard to see about some breakfast for the men, I was accosted by a man who knelt at my feet and clasped me round the knees, asking me *in French* to take him to an English officer. He was evidently a gentleman and spoke French with an Italian accent. He seemed in great distress, and indeed from his manner I had no doubt he was. I had some difficulty in persuading him that I was an officer, and I felt ashamed when I realised how the strain and fatigue of what we had gone through during three consecutive days and nights must have altered my appearance, for I had not had my clothes off the whole time.

When convinced I *was* an officer, the man confided to me in the strictest confidence that he was an officer of the Italian Navy. He said that he hated the English and came to Egypt to offer his services to Arabi, and he had been fighting against us since the campaign began. He told me that at first Arabi treated him with great consideration and courtesy, kept him always by him, and had in fact employed him as an extra Staff Officer. After the second defeat at Kassassin, he said, Arabi for some reason became distrustful of him, had him arrested and kept in solitary confinement, and from that moment onward he had been grossly ill-treated. On more than one occasion he had been bastinadoed, and he showed me how his feet had been lacerated. He was almost in rags and, as I found,

on the verge of starvation, for he implored me to get him some food. I put him in charge of a N.C.O. with orders to see that he had a square meal at once, and his gratitude took the form of imparting some information which was valuable.

He told me that before Arabi changed his treatment of him, he had shared a room in Cairo with a very young English naval officer, and that, unless the fall of Arabi and surrender of Cairo had brought about altered conditions, he could indicate the lodging of the English officer.

It flashed across me that in the early stages of the campaign, when we were facing the enemy lines at Kafr-Duar, a young midshipman from our Navy had been taken prisoner during a reconnaissance, and in spite of all efforts had not been heard of since. I instructed the N.C.O., as soon as the Italian was catered for, to take a file with him to accompany him into the town, and, if successful in finding him, to bring back the English officer to me at once. I urged haste, for I was sure that under the circumstances every moment was precious. Within a comparatively short space of time the party returned, and I was delighted to see with them a chubby-faced lad, well turned out and evidently well cared for. As I had conjectured, he was the midshipman, and I questioned him closely : his report was of the greatest interest.

He said that throughout Arabi had treated him kindly ; he had been well lodged and fed. Arabi, he said, used even to take him out driving with him through the streets of Cairo, and I realised the motive for his so doing. It



was, of course, a feather in his cap to show the public an English officer-prisoner. I found my young friend quite ignorant of what had happened, and he was naturally delighted to learn the favourable turn events had taken, whereby his captivity was at an end.

Shortly after, in the course of the morning, news came that the Guards Brigade, under the Duke of Connaught, was about to arrive immediately in Cairo, and during that day Darley and I were very glad to be quit of our responsibility by handing over the keys to H.R.H., who from then took command of the Citadel, which was garrisoned by a battalion of Scots Guards.

I have thought my experience with the Italian worthy of record, partly by reason of its sequel.

In 1902, when I was Chief Staff Officer of the South-eastern District and quartered at Dover, I received an intimation from the Admiralty that they were sending an officer (a Captain R.N.) down to make an official inspection and report on the forts and general disposition of the Dover defences. The Admiralty requested that every possible facility should be given to assist this officer in making his inspection. The name struck me as similar to that of my friend the middy of 1882, and when later there entered my office a smart, stalwart Captain of the Navy, I recognised him immediately and asked him if he was not one and the same whom I had met in Cairo. He said he was, and I think he was as pleased as I was to renew an acquaintance which had begun under such interesting circumstances. He is now a very distinguished Admiral, and if ever he

should cast his eye on these lines I trust he will believe that I always retain very pleasant memories of the rare occasions on which our respective fates brought us into touch with one another.

During our long halt at Kassassin, our only source for drinking purposes was the sweet-water canal which ran through the camp. After the actions of August 28 and September 9, which were fought near and along its banks, the canal water became anything but "sweet"; it was badly tainted and, to put it mildly, extremely unwholesome; with the result that ere long many of the Mounted Infantry were down with dysentery or typhoid. Though affected myself, I had just managed to hold on through Drury Lowe's march until the day after we had taken the Citadel. When on that day my battalion reached Cairo, our regimental doctor found me lying in a stall in the stables of Kasr-el-nil Barracks, where I had rejoined the M.I. after we had handed over the Citadel. The medical officer pronounced me to have been suffering from typhoid for, he said, some weeks, and he at once found me a bed in the first hotel which opened in Cairo.

After many weeks, during which I nearly "went out," I recovered sufficiently to be sent home in a hospital ship.

My recollections as recited above are saddened by the fact that I was afterwards destined to witness the death of three of the officers therein referred to.

Poor Darley was killed during the Gordon

Relief Expedition, when the Dervishes broke into our square at Abou-Klea (January 17, 1885).

Two days later, just before we closed the zareba at the battle of Gubat (January 19, 1885), "Sankey" Herbert, who had come out again with Wolseley, and I went off to have a look at the enemy forces in front of us, blocking our way to the Nile. As we were returning to the zareba, "Sankey" remarked to me, "This is splendid. We'll have breakfast with the Dervishes this morning, but you and I will dine together on the river-bank this evening."

Shortly after, Lord Airlie, who was forming up the square outside the zareba, preparatory to forcing our way through to the water, was wounded, and I was told off to take over his work. As I left the zareba a body was carried past me on a stretcher. It was poor "Sankey," shot through the throat; and the next day when we had marched back there from the river, I assisted to bury my dear friend, and before I left him I put a cross of stones on his grave.

Our beloved Commander in the desert march, Sir Herbert Stewart, was badly wounded that same day. We took him the next day down to the fort we were building on the river, and when Gordon's steamers joined us, he was lodged on board one of them moored alongside of this fort, two miles above Metamneh. Here he lingered for the weeks we passed there, but the doctor's reports were never favourable.

When Buller arrived and retirement to Korti was decided upon, it was preceded the day before by a convoy with all the wounded under Colonel

Talbot (General the Hon. Sir Reginald Talbot), and I was told off to command the advance guard and act as guide to the convoy. It had been arranged to leave the fort by night, but a delay in starting, owing to the suffering of some of the wounded, resulted in our leaving February 13 at daybreak and our movement being observed. The consequence was that in passing some thick scrub near Shebacat, we were surrounded and had one of the toughest fights I had seen. During the fighting I passed several times the rows of stretchers where the wounded were lying, and it seemed as if their condition was hopeless, for where they lay they were for hours exposed to a heavy cross-fire from the surrounding scrub. Herbert Stewart mercifully passed away during this action, and having beaten off the Dervishes by the unexpected arrival of the Light Camel Regiment in their rear, we carried him on with us into the open desert, where we buried him with military honours on some high ground between Metamneh and Abou-Klea.

I had the honour of being one of the pall-bearers to the man I had revered as a leader and learnt to love as a friend. And so, with sad hearts, we left him in his lonely grave in that desert which he had told me he loved, and which was the scene of so many of his ever-memorable services to his country.

## CHAPTER IX

DUBLIN, 1883

I LOOK back with pleasure to the time I passed in Ireland when A.D.C. to General Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar, commanding the Forces in Ireland. He had served in the Crimea with the Grenadier Guards, and was wounded in the war. As General Commanding the London District he had proved such a success that the term of his appointment had been extended.

When on return from Egypt in 1882 I landed at Portsmouth, where Prince Edward commanded at the time, I found him and Lord Gosford with my brother on the quay, armed with a large basket of every kind of provender which they had brought for me from the Princess and which, though I was ravenous, the doctors, alas ! forbade me to touch.

Soon afterwards, when he was appointed Commander of the Forces in Ireland, Prince Edward offered me the post of A.D.C., and I joined his Staff at the Royal Hospital in Dublin the moment I was sufficiently recovered in health to return to duty.

Those days in Dublin were as useful as well as a happy experience, for I was in touch with the officers of the Head Quarters Staff there and learnt much that was helpful to me in later years.

Prince Edward was the beau-ideal for Com-



mander of the Forces in those restless days for Ireland. His ever-ready wit, sense of the ridiculous, bonhomie and personal charm won for him a popularity with the Irish which, I venture to think, has seldom if ever been surpassed.

Among the officials with whom he came into touch he had many admirers, while he was a special favourite with the dons of Trinity College.

In those days, with such a hostess as the Princess, the Royal Hospital was indeed a centre of attraction.

I had five horses in the stables there, and in my spare time I enjoyed enormously the hunting in Ireland, but my duties prevented me seeing as much of it as I would have liked to.

Of the Head Quarters Staff there I have happy memories of my associations with Colonel Mansfield Clarke, then A.A.G. Irish Command, later General Sir Charles Mansfield Clarke, Bart., and one time Governor of Malta. It was a very pleasant surprise for me when, during my severe illness in 1924 I was laid up in that haven for officers which my dear friend "Sister Agnes" provides for them, I received a visit from this distinguished soldier, whom I had not seen for years, and with whom I greatly enjoyed a talk over old times. His kindly thought of me after all those years touched me more than I can say.

My happy time on the Staff in Ireland was abruptly and unexpectedly cut short when, in 1884, I returned to Egypt for the Gordon Relief Expedition.

## CHAPTER X

### THE GORDON RELIEF EXPEDITION, 1884-1885

SIR REDVERS BULLER—SIR HERBERT STEWART—MAJOR  
KITCHENER

WHEN, in the autumn of 1884, the Government arrived at the belated decision to send out to the Sudan an expedition with the object of relieving General Gordon, Lord Wolseley again nominated me for special service. Gordon by that time was in Khartum, with large forces drawn from hostile tribes concentrating under the Mahdi for the investment of the city.

Of the four Camel Regiments formed for the purposes of the expedition, one, the Guards Camel Regiment, was composed of 2 officers and 40 other ranks found by each of the then existing seven battalions of Guards. Lieut.-Colonel the Hon. Evelyn Boscawen, of my regiment, was appointed to command the Guards Camel Regiment, Lieut.-Colonel Graves Sawle and I were the two officers selected for the detachment of our 2nd Battalion, while my brother Vesey and Hugh Amherst (later Lord Amherst) went out with the men detailed from the 1st Battalion Coldstream.

#### LORD WOLSELEY: HIS CHOICE OF ROUTE

At the time we were leaving Cairo in 1884 I heard many discussions as to whether the Suakim-Berber route would not have been preferable to the Nile route which was eventually decided upon, and I was given to understand that General Sir

Frederick Stephenson, at that time commanding in Egypt, was of opinion that the Suakim-Berber route would be the better of the two.

Having quite recently heard similar views repeated, I take this opportunity to offer, for what it may be worth, an opinion on this point, founded on personal experience gained during the expedition.

If opinion could be based on the map alone, there could be no doubt as regards the solution of the route problem. Time was, to the man in the street, undoubtedly the vital and essential point.

In those days railhead was at Assiout, and the limit of steamship transport at Assouan. The remainder of the route we covered on camels, by forced marches made principally during the cooler hours of the night. Thus an expedition, the nucleus of which had left England in September 1884, only arrived in time to fight its first battle (Abou-Klea) on January 17, 1885.

Further, the necessity for protection of a line of communications which, starting from Alexandria, approached in length 1,500 miles (180 of which were across desert) had so depleted numbers, that when Earle's column left us at Korti, barely 1,500 men were available for that first fight of the desert column.

These points, as regards the route taken, were certainly worthy of consideration.

But I think that anyone who served throughout that expedition will agree that "*time*" was not the only vital issue for consideration when selecting the route, and I have reason to believe that in the mind of our gifted Chief, beside the

question of "*time*," that of "*water*" loomed largely.

At any rate, to those who during some weeks had to exist on a daily ration corresponding to three glasses of water for all purposes, washing, drinking, and cooking, the necessity for securing water supply was brought sternly home. As it was, the so-called water was drawn warm, yellow, and stinking from water-skins carried on camel-back, while the camels went, at times, five days, and horses certainly, on one occasion, seventy-two hours without water.

If that Suakim-Berber railway could have been completed in time, and, what is more important, once completed could have been held, the water problem was solved. Without that railway laid, running, and protected, was the Berber route practicable? I must confess it has never since occurred to me to be so.

At the time of the Suakim Expedition, we of Herbert Stewart's desert column were either bottled up in the fort at Gubat or later otherwise employed where only scanty information could reach us. But, from what we afterwards learnt, to overcome the difficulties experienced at Suakim regarding preservation of the railway plant intact even during construction (not to mention protection of the line once completed) would have occupied more valuable time than did the route actually taken.

As to the possibilities of laying a line to Berber at that moment, I had later an authoritative opinion. One evening at Kimbolton, while I was watching a game in the billiard-room, the evening

papers arrived and I seized on the *Pall Mall Gazette*. There I found an announcement that the railway plant sent to Suakim had been purchased by the contractors, Messrs. Lucas & Aird, for transmission to India. I called out to Lord Hartington, who was seated the other side of the room, "I see that your railway plant is at last going to be made use of."

He asked me what railway I was talking of.

I replied that I was referring to the line he had intended to be laid from Suakim to Berber.

His answer was: "You don't suppose that after I learnt the difficulties I ever thought that under those conditions it could reach Berber!"

This expression of opinion from the responsible Minister at the time has always seemed to me to be fairly conclusive that in his choice of routes Lord Wolseley was right.

#### SIR REDVERS BULLER

My long and varied associations with that most distinguished General, Sir Redvers Buller, will ever remain vivid in my memory, and, as will be seen, they commenced by no means auspiciously.

My first acquaintance with him was when I was at the Staff College and he came over from Aldershot to lunch with "Curly" Hutton (afterwards Lieut.-General Sir Edward Hutton). I sat opposite to Buller at luncheon. He could see I was a Guardsman by my frock-coat, nevertheless during the meal he never lost an opportunity of crabbing and making caustic remarks about the Guards. Afterwards I told Hutton I didn't like him. He replied, "Wait till you



know him. You will alter your opinion," and I certainly had reason frequently, in years to come, to change my views.

My next meeting with Colonel Buller was in the 1882 Campaign, when I was in command of a troop of Mounted Infantry at Kassassin. On the occasion I refer to, Buller conducted a reconnaissance of the lines at Tel-el-Kebir which took place only a day or two before we finally attacked and carried the position. My troop was acting as escort to the sketching party when we arrived just as the day broke (after a night march from Kassassin) on a height flanking and overlooking the long line of the Egyptian position. I often wondered how it was that the vantage-point we seized in the dark of the early hours of the morning was so easily occupied. During the night we had somehow passed unnoticed a small village, now in our rear, from which, as the day broke, a hot fire was at once directed on my men lying on the ridge facing the enemy lines, they being thus taken in reverse.

After I had suffered some casualties I ventured to approach the group of officers sketching. Buller being the senior officer, I reported to him this village in our rear and asked leave to take some of my men and clear it. He took no notice of me at all and never answered my request. I returned to my men, and by then the situation had got worse, many casualties having occurred. I returned to Buller and told him I could see through my glasses that the village was full of camels and sheep, both of which would be of the greatest value to us, and I again repeated

my request to rush the place. Again he gave no reply. I returned to my men, and as I remounted my horse a bullet struck him in the shoulder just in front of my knee. I was fond of the horse; he belonged to my brother and had won a race in Ireland, and I rushed back and rather peremptorily requested Buller to give me some instructions; whereupon he turned to me, and said: "I wish you'd stop your men firing; they make such a hell of a smoke I can't see."

Needless to say, my feelings towards the Colonel were not improved by this episode, especially when on our return to Kassassin in the afternoon I was told that the Mounted Infantry had missed a great chance that morning, for they ought to have captured a large stock of camels and sheep. On reflection since I have often thought how riling it must have been to have a unique chance of gaining information of vital importance disturbed by repeated interruptions from an importunate subaltern.

It was later that I learnt to appreciate the true character of this bluff but lovable soldier.

#### THE DESERT COLUMN

The Gordon Relief Expedition has long been a matter of history. I give here only some personal experiences, taken from the only diary I ever kept, which I hope may be of interest.

The Camel Corps, consisting of four regiments, Heavy and Light (drawn from Cavalry), Guards, and Mounted Infantry, was assembled during December 1884 at Korti, where Lord Wolseley had by then established his Head Quarters.

Some time was here occupied in training the Corps for moving as a Brigade. For however much the square formation was essential for actual fighting, the camel was the means of transport. The four regiments averaged a strength each of roughly 410 all ranks, the Guards being brought up to strength by the addition of a detachment of Royal Marines, hardened old soldiers and good fighters who throughout pulled splendidly with our men.

On December 30, 1884, an advance column with Sir Herbert Stewart in command left Korti for Gakdul. The column consisted of the Guards Camel Regiment with stores.

I was in command of the advance guard, and rode out of camp with Herbert Stewart. At some little distance into the desert we passed Lord Wolseley, standing alone on a mound; he waved his hand to us and as we passed him he wished us good luck.

Stewart was in high spirits, and I remember his saying that whenever he left the river and got into the desert, the air was so different, it felt like exchanging the atmosphere of London for that of a moor in Scotland.

When we arrived at the Gakdul Wells, Stewart left us there and returned to Korti to bring up the rest of the column. The so-called "wells" were really reservoirs, where on the very rare occasions of rainfall the water collected in pools, formed at the base and in clefts of black rocky heights, evidently of volcanic formation.

On January 12 Stewart returned with the rest of the column; and after watering camels and

horses (the 19th Hussars under Colonel Barrow had joined us) we started on the 14th for Metamneh.

Our force was roughly 1,500 men and 2,300 camels, with three 7-lb. mountain screw guns, and one Gardner machine gun. On the afternoon of the 16th, as we approached a long range of steep hills, numerous bodies of enemy scouts were observed along the ridges, gesticulating and flourishing spears. Our scouts, advancing along a wide pass which lay in front of us, reported a strong force of Dervishes blocking the pass some miles ahead, their position marked by a line of flags. They were evidently drawn up in front of the wells of Abou-Klea.

The pass was commanded by the heights on both flanks, which were manned by riflemen, who, we afterwards learnt, were drawn from Gordon's trained troops in the tribes which had deserted him.

We entered the pass, the 19th Hussars securing our flanks as far as possible, and had penetrated about a mile before night came on. Forming a zareba, we bivouacked for the night. The enemy gave us no rest all night, in the darkness marching and drumming right up to the zareba, while the sharpshooters from the heights peppered us, especially whenever a light was struck in the hospital which had been formed, and protected by boxes of stores, where casualties were being dealt with.

Early next morning we advanced in square on the Dervish position. Colonel Fred Burnaby, of Khiva fame, who had recently joined us, was in immediate command of the square.

During the advance the square was subjected to heavy and continuous fire from the Dervish marksmen lining the heights on both flanks, but as in advancing we loaded up the camels inside the square with our wounded, the enemy had no idea of our casualties ; while the screw guns did fearful havoc amongst the enemy in front, who could be seen bolting in hundreds from the position. Indeed, as we got nearer it appeared as if the bulk of the enemy forces had fled, for except the line of flags little or nothing was visible.

Our direction in advancing would have left the flags on our left flank, and just then Stewart came to Burnaby, and I heard him say, " There's very few of them left there now ; incline half left towards the flags ; I want that green one."

No sooner had we changed direction than out of a deep hollow, about 400 yards distant, rose a great mass of spearmen, and headed by their leaders mounted, carrying flags and chanting the Koran, the whole force bore down on us at a run.

With the object of changing direction the square had been halted, and intending to receive the attack on a bit of rising ground just in front, Burnaby ordered an advance of a few yards. The front and side faces of the square moved off at the word, but the camels, having " dropped " on the halt, took some seconds to get on their legs, and the rear face being thus impeded a gap was created.

The Dervish attack was at first directed on the left front corner of the square, manned by Guardsmen and Mounted Infantry. A withering



fire caused the enemy to swerve in the direction of the left rear corner, where the gap was.

Charlie Beresford rushed his Gardner gun into the gap, but after a few rounds it unfortunately jammed.

At that moment I saw Burnaby ride out through the gap; the Dervish hordes were by that time within a few yards of the square; quite alone he charged them as if at the head of a squadron, and in an instant he was surrounded. The last I saw of him he was doing wonderful execution with the sword, until he finally disappeared. When later we found his body, it was riddled with spear wounds. The hero of Khiva had maintained his reputation until the end.

The overwhelming mass of Dervishes was by now at hand-grips with the left face of the square, which by sheer weight of numbers was gradually forced back, wheeling inwards until they approached the rear of the front face. There the Guardsmen, with front and rear ranks back to back, for by now they were attacked on both sides, stood like a bristling wall that never budged, doing fine work with the bayonet.

By then it really looked as if the masses surrounding us on all sides must succeed, so small seemed the khaki-clad contingent in the midst of the masses of spearmen; when suddenly, for some reason, still I believe unsolved, the enemy forces wavered, halted, and then began slowly and sullenly to retreat, and thus they eventually left us in possession of the ground and, most important, of the wells.

It was estimated that the enemy force that

day numbered about 10,000, out of which roughly 5,000 took part in the attack on the square. Later it was found that about 1,100 of them had been killed in and around the square.

We were lucky to get off with nearly a quarter of our strength disabled, while killed and badly wounded totalled about 200.

These figures seem small nowadays, but it was a serious loss with nearly 180 miles of desert between us and any reinforcement; while we still had miles of desert between us and the river, with the enemy an unknown quantity.

Next day, after burying the dead, we moved on, and on the 19th, at the end of a trying night march, we met a fresh and still larger force of Dervishes covering Metamneh and the approaches to the Nile near Gubat.

I have already described how we that day forced our way in square to the Nile, and how we later established ourselves on the river in a small fort which we built there. Our position on the river was later strengthened by fortifying and occupying the old deserted village of Gubat (on high ground 800 yards north of the river), which was named the Guards Fort. On the 20th we returned to the zareba, found it unmolested, buried the dead, and brought the wounded down to the river.

On the 21st a reconnaissance in force proved that the defences of the town of Metamneh, the walls loopholed and 13-lb. Krupp guns mounted, would offer a formidable problem for an attack on the town by our attenuated force.

During the reconnaissance of Metamneh, four

of Gordon's steamers hove in sight, and we were shortly after joined by Kashm-el-mus (styled Gordon's Admiral) with a contingent of his Sudanese troops, who were triumphant at meeting us and wanted to attack the town at once. As, however, their leader reported that while coming down from Khartum he had seen a large force on its way to attack us, and as this meant a threat not only to our wounded, whom we had left but scantily protected, but also to our line of communications with Korti, Sir Charles Wilson, by that time in command of the column, decided to abandon the attempt for the present, and we returned upstream to our position near by, where we were destined to remain about a month.

That day it was decided to send at once two of the steamers to Khartum with Sir C. Wilson in command, and a small detachment of the Royal Sussex Regiment with three officers, just to show the British uniform. Steps were taken immediately to further the plan.

I must here digress to correct, in justice to Sir Charles Wilson, a fallacy which gained credence at the time, and which quite recently I have heard repeated.

From the day Gordon's steamers joined us not a moment was wasted before two of them left us for Khartum. The steamers had arrived devoid of coal; and the principal delay was caused by the necessity for gathering wood, the sole fuel available, while wood was only obtainable by pulling up the wooden framework of the many "zakeiahs" dotted along the banks of the Nile for irrigation purposes.

Further, some time was occupied in weeding out the Egyptian element on board the steamers, as by Gordon's instructions conveyed through Kashm-el-mus it was essential that only Sudanese troops should return to Khartum.

The "wooding" of the steamers entailed a voyage of many miles both up and down stream, with frequent halts and immense labour before the two ships were finally stoked and started on their voyage to Khartum, which they did at daybreak on January 24.

At the time it seemed only natural that blame for the delay before starting, once Gordon's steamers joined us on the 21st, should be given expression to, and I must confess that at first I myself was inclined to that view.

As, however, I afterwards got the facts above stated from Lord Charles Beresford, who commanded the vessel which was sent in search of fuel, I feel that it is only right that I should here place them on record.

By this time casualties had seriously deprived us of senior officers. Colonel Burnaby had been killed, Sir Herbert Stewart was lying mortally wounded on board one of Gordon's steamers moored off our little fort, and when Sir Charles Wilson left us Colonel Boscawen succeeded to the command of what remained of the force. Boscawen asked me to act as Staff Officer to him. Among my duties I was responsible for seeing that the garrison "stood to arms" an hour before daybreak every morning, and at that moment to hand in a "state" of the fighting force available for the day. I have a note of the

figures of one morning after Sir Charles Wilson had left for Khartum. It shows a total of 441 rifles. These figures, with a large garrison in Metamneh close by, and reports of a strong force in a river-fort above us (which fort Beresford so gallantly and successfully engaged later), were not encouraging, and we daily looked for news from the steamers which had gone up to Khartum.

On February 1, some hours before daybreak, I was roused by hearing loud calls for Colonel Boscawen. He had for some days been down with fever, and having built a shelter of rushes over him, I was lying across the entrance to ensure his being undisturbed. I jumped up and called out that Colonel Boscawen was ill and asked what was wanted. Then in spite of the darkness I recognised my old friend Eddie Wortley (now Major-General the Hon. E. Stuart-Wortley), who had left with Wilson for Khartum. I glanced towards the river, expecting to see the lights of a ship, and seeing nothing said, "Where are the steamers? What's the news?" He replied, "The very worst."

Then he told me the sad story of the death of Gordon and the capture of Khartum by the Mahdi.

As long as I live I shall never forget that moment when I realised that all our labours had been in vain, that we had arrived too late, and Gordon was dead.

In recounting to me the details of this terrible tragedy Wortley told me that when the two steamers arrived at Omdurman they found the whole place in the hands of the Mahdi; they



steamed on up as far as Gordon's Palace in Khartum, being fired at and shelled from both banks. At the Palace Gordon's flag had been hauled down, and shouts from the crowds on the banks informed them that Gordon was dead. They turned downstream, and some way below Omdurman the steamers were wrecked, evidently with *malice prepense* on the part of the captains. Wortley concluded by saying that he had come down in a little row boat to report from Sir Charles Wilson, whom, with the small British detachment, he had left on an island.

It was still pitch dark, and with the exception of those on duty no one was stirring in the fort. Wortley and I at once woke up Wardrop (D.A.A.G.), Beresford (commanding Naval Brigade), and Barrow (commanding 19th Hussars), and a council was held. It was Sunday morning, and it was decided for the moment to keep the information secret and to hold church parade as if nothing had happened, but to get the news started off to Korti at once before daybreak, which was imminent. Once the daylight came it was risky to leave the fort and we had nearly 200 miles of desert between us and Korti. The news was duly sent off, and that same day Lord Charles Beresford left on the s.s. *Safia* to bring back Sir Charles Wilson's force, which he accomplished successfully, returning on February 4. During this expedition his gallant fight at Wad Habeshi, where the *Safia* engaged successfully a strongly held fort with guns mounted, is a matter of history, worthy of the annals of the British Navy.

Almost the next day we received an impertinent message from the Mahdi, to the effect that "Allah had delivered the traitor Gordon into his hands, and that the same fate awaited us." "But," he said, "he did not make war on English soldiers, or on the woman who ruled over them. If, therefore, we would all become good Mussulmans and adopt the Dervish uniform (the Jibba), he would graciously agree to spare our lives."

This was a high tone for the leader whose forces had been smashed and dispersed on every occasion on which they had met us; but when one remembered that the fall of Khartum released another 40,000 Dervishes, who had been besieging the city, it is perhaps excusable.

Rumours reached us about this time that the Mahdi was perpetually urging his sub-commanders to lead their forces against us, but that they, with their previous experiences, declined the proposal unless the Mahdi himself would take part in and lead the attack. This probably explains why during a critical period we were left undisturbed in our little fort.

On February 11 the arrival of a small relief column, with General Buller in command, was signalled, and Wardrop and I rode out to receive them on behalf of Colonel Boscawen. The column consisted mainly of six companies of the Royal Irish Regiment. Major Kitchener, whom we had parted with at Gakdul, was with Buller's Staff. In our dug-out in the river-fort a conference was held, and once the situation had been explained to Buller he ordered the wounded to be evacuated before daybreak next

morning, and a general retirement of the whole force for the following day.

I have already mentioned my experiences with the wounded convoy and the death of Sir Herbert Stewart during the fight at Shebacat on February 13.

On the evening of the 14th we brought our convoy into Abou-Klea, on the 15th the whole column arrived there, and Buller at once sent me on with dispatches, which I took as far as Gakdul. Buller's subsequent defence of and retreat from Abou-Klea are matters of history. When, finally, the column reached Korti, we were a much depleted force compared with that which had left there for the march across the desert. I refrain from figures, but I can say that the remains of a force comprising 4 regiments which had left mounted on camels marched back into Korti on foot, many without boots and in rags. My boots, I remember, were only held together with the wires from soda-water bottles.

On the outward march of the desert column from Korti the Guards Camel Regiment had, as already stated, been stationed for some time at Gakdul while our camels returned to Korti to bring up the rest of the force. As the latest Staff College fledgling I was there told off to organise a plan for the defences of this most important reservoir of water in mid-desert, and before we resumed the advance I had established a chain of forts crowning the heights which surrounded the wells with wire entanglements and every kind of trap that I could devise for the

Dervishes, which after all were never tested, I must confess, rather to my regret.

## MAJOR KITCHENER

At that time I had the extreme good fortune to see a great deal of Major Kitchener, who had come with us from Korti and remained at Gakdul while we were there, he being responsible for the Intelligence work at this advanced post. Our respective duties commencing at an early hour daily, we frequently breakfasted alone together before I climbed to my work and he rode off to his. This was my first meeting with Kitchener, but under such circumstances we became on the most friendly terms, and I got to know well and learnt to appreciate the true character of the man who was destined later to render such signal services to the country. When, during the Great War, I served under him in the War Office, he welcomed me warmly, and on several occasions he entrusted me with missions which were of great interest.

One morning during our *tête-à-tête* breakfast at Gakdul I asked him if he felt inclined to tell me what chances of opposition there were to our further advance towards the river, then about 80 miles distant. After some reflection he ridiculed the notion of strong enemy forces between us and the Nile, adding that possibly a small force and "a few old women" would be all we were likely to see between Gakdul and the Nile. In view of the masses of Dervishes we met when we advanced, and routed at Abou-Klea and Gubat respectively, not to mention the garrison

in Metamneh, as I got to know better this inscrutable man I realised that on that occasion, for some subtle reason, he had pulled my leg successfully.

I might add here that when Buller joined us at Gubat, one of the first remarks he made to me was, " Evelyn Wood don't think much of your forts at Gakdul "; and on questioning him as to the objections I discovered that he didn't agree with the principle of crowning and holding the high ground, which I ventured to maintain was vitally important. Buller certainly found it so, as he later told me himself, for when hemmed in at Abou-Klea during the retreat, the occupation and retention of the surrounding heights proved of the greatest value.

During these stirring times I had many opportunities of learning what a fine character General Buller was, and I conceived for him an admiration, even affection, which I never lost. I look back with gratitude to my associations with him later, when he was Adjutant-General during the years I passed in Paris as Military Attaché.



## CHAPTER XI

### ▲ VISIT TO THE BALKAN PROVINCES

IN the autumn of 1886, having returned in July of the previous year from the Nile Expedition, Major Stuart Wortley and I went out at the instance of the Intelligence Department to see what we could of, and report on, the armies of the Balkan States, then in their infancy. Charles Kinsky accompanied us as far as Vienna, where under his guidance we spent a very pleasant time, and amongst other distractions received invitations to a State ball, where we were presented to the Emperor.

It was during this visit to Vienna that I met for the first time George (afterwards Sir George) and Lady Georgina Buchanan, he being then Second Secretary to the Embassy. His father, Sir Andrew, had been Ambassador there at the time the Embassy was built.

At that time originated a friendship with them which lasted until, to my sorrow, death removed them both. On several occasions I visited them at the various posts where he was accredited, and I always regretted being unable to do so while he was Ambassador at Petrograd.

After a few days in Vienna, Wortley and I went on to Belgrade, where we had audiences of King Milan, who received us most cordially, placed an orderly officer at our disposal, and gave instruc-

tions to the civil and military authorities in Serbia to assist us in every way they possibly could.

My first impressions of Belgrade were bad. In those days there was no electric light in the streets, no tramways, and the roads were in a most disgraceful state of neglect. We lodged at the Hôtel Splendide, a very small two-storied building meagrely equipped and furnished. The first morning my servant, on calling me, told me there was not a bath to be had in the hotel. I sent for the porter. A broken-down English jockey appeared and I sent him out to buy a bath. He returned after some time saying there was not a bath to be bought in the town! Later an enormous bath on wheels arrived *from the hospital*. I rejected it, and was later supplied by the kindness of our Minister, Mr. Wyndham, with an india-rubber tub to which I stuck for the rest of the Expedition.

Our orderly officer's wife was an Irishwoman who had been a governess in Belgrade. I have never met a more ardent Irish "patriot," nor any Fenian more abusive of England or more discursive on the "wrongs of Ireland." She was surprised when I told her I was a compatriot, and put her right on many subjects as to which she was completely astray. These sort of people abroad can do much harm.

On driving to the Palace for our first audience by the King, our carriage, an open landau, fell into a hole in the street, and Wortley and I, in full uniform, narrowly escaped being thrown out. The carriage was extricated with difficulty. When the King asked me later what were my

impressions of his capital, I ventured to say that I thought the streets wanted mending, with which he heartily agreed.

Whatever may be said of King Milan's private life, I have always maintained that his knowledge of Balkan conditions and politics was unique, only perhaps to be surpassed later by Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria. My eulogies regarding his astuteness and knowledge were more than once the subject of chaff by the Prince of Wales (King Edward), who used to refer to him as "your friend King Milan."

When later Prince Ferdinand of Coburg came to rule over Bulgaria, and I was the guest of Sir Nicholas O'Connor, our Minister at Sofia, I was most kindly received by the Prince, and honoured by listening to his views on the Balkan situation on several occasions. On this particular subject he impressed me much in the same way as King Milan had, but undoubtedly he was a far more serious personality to be reckoned with.

Milan was certainly a good talker and *raconteur*. At this first audience he gave us a detailed description of an attack which had been made on him and his sister when as children playing in the Topchida Park in Belgrade, instigated, he said, by supporters of the rival dynasty of Kara-Georgevitch (now reigning). He enlarged on the bitter feud which for many years had existed between the Obrénovitch and the Kara-Georgevitch dynasties, and Wortley and I were initiated that day into much which was soon to make history.

The King invited us to a State ball which

was to be given that evening at the Palace, and to this day I have some favours which Queen Nathalie gave me in the cotillon. Her Majesty was a striking-looking lady, very much the Eastern type of beauty. During the ball the King presented me to his sister, whom he described as "full of lead," for as a child she had been wounded in the head, body, and legs during the assault above referred to.

At the conclusion of the audience that morning, just before we left, a small boy entered the room and shyly came up to me, saying in English, "Good morning. I have just been out for a walk with my tutor, and now I am going for a ride on my pony." (It was the ill-fated boy destined later to be murdered with his Queen, within ten years of his having succeeded to the throne of Serbia as King Alexander.)

King Milan laughed and said, "He can't talk a word of English, and has just learnt that sentence like a parrot from his tutor, who is outside the door." Later on I was to be reminded of this episode.

On this occasion the King talked openly on every subject. I gathered that His Majesty was not particularly happy in the semi-civilisation by which he was surrounded, and sighed for the attractions of the Paris boulevards. His *bête noire* was Bulgaria, and we were treated to a one-sided description of the perpetual friction and constant fighting which took place between the neighbours. The information gained that day was to prove useful later, when I was appointed Military Attaché in Belgrade and Bucharest.



*An Colonel Douglas Dawson  
témoinage de très bon et vif souvenir.  
Belgrade 20. Avril 1895. S. Milan.*

KING MILAN OF SERBIA.

*Pirou, Paris.*





Among the places of military interest we saw in Serbia, Wortley and I visited the Serbian Arsenal at Kragujevatz and also the town of Nish, a military head quarters. At Pirot, where by King Milan's orders we were hospitably received by the Préfet, we attended a peasant wedding which we met proceeding along the street. We stopped at a shop, bought a present for the bride, were invited to the wedding ceremony, and attended the breakfast after it. Once the breakfast was finished the national dance, the Kolo, went on for hours to the accompaniment of pretty much the same droning monotonous tune, during which, to my surprise, many telegrams congratulating the happy couple continued to arrive.

From Pirot we crossed the frontier into Bulgaria and made our way chiefly by road, but partly by truck on the Constantinople railway, at that time under construction, to Sofia. In Sofia we found the authorities most helpful and obliging, but the Regent Stambuloff (afterwards assassinated) was absent. Prince Alexander of Bulgaria had only recently been abducted by Russian influence and the Regency established. Intercourse with Bulgarian officers disclosed to me a loyalty and devotion on their part to the Prince they had lost which was most touching. Both at that time and for some years after whenever I visited Bulgaria officers used to approach me and ask news of him *sotto voce*. "How is he? have you seen him lately?" "Does he talk of Bulgaria?" "Tell him how much we think of him and long for him back again."

I used later to talk with Prince Alexander of these episodes when he commanded a Brigade in the Austrian army while I was Military Attaché in Vienna. I was not surprised at his officers' devotion, for a more attractive, charming personality I have seldom met.

By comparison with the Serb the Bulgarian as a soldier impressed me favourably, but indeed throughout the Balkan States I was much struck by the physique.

The weak point everywhere, as I was able later to confirm, was the General Staff; and in this respect the Rumanian was naturally superior, with a large proportion of officers educated at Saint-Cyr.

Snow fell heavily while we were in Sofia, and when at the conclusion of our visit we started for Philippopolis *en route* for Constantinople we proceeded by four-horse sleigh, followed by a second one with baggage. At Vakarel the snow was so deep that we were warned not to proceed further, especially as from there the route became a steep ascent, while the neighbourhood was said to be infested with brigands. But the inn was so full of vermin that we were eaten alive even while trying to sleep on two kitchen chairs, and, despite the warning, we left early next morning to climb the slopes of the Iktiman Pass. In the dark of the early morning I had to pull the driver out of his bed with an unloaded pistol at his head before he would consent to start, so frightened was he of snow and brigands combined.

As we proceeded, the snow got deeper, and just before we began to ascend the slope it was

nearly impossible to find the bridges of the little streams the road crossed, for at times it was impossible to keep to the road.

By the time we began ascending, the snowfall was so thick we could hardly see ahead, and every now and then the horses would suddenly stop on the edge of a precipice. After some hours passed advancing a few paces and then halting, first my servant and later the driver had to descend from the box and walk behind the sleigh for shelter from the driving snow. Shortly after this Wortley fell across me in a faint from the intense cold, but I soon brought him round with a strong jorum of whisky. Then the driver of the baggage-sleigh behind called out he couldn't go any farther. We were rather puzzled as to what to do, for if we halted for any time the snow threatened to bury us, and we could barely see a yard in front of us. Just then luckily within a very short distance we came on a small wooden hut, and here we left the baggage-sleigh with a good supply of provisions, forage, and whisky. We were able thus slightly to accelerate our pace and so struggled on, and just as the situation looked most hopeless, the road suddenly levelled and the driver reported we were at the summit of the Pass. After traversing a long stretch of bare tableland, we began to descend and gradually our troubles subsided. The snow stopped falling, and we eventually emerged into sunshine, passing green scrubbed slopes with stunted oaks, until some miles down we came on an inn. Here, to our surprise, we met the Regent, M. Stambuloff, and

his Staff, returning from Turkey and awaiting a chance of crossing the Pass. They would hardly believe we had just traversed the route. In M. Stambuloff I found a most courteous and agreeable gentleman of whom I was destined to see more later.

From the inn we descended a long gentle decline for a considerable distance while the sun shone brightly, and when we traversed the smiling valley where the celebrated attar of roses is manufactured, one wondered whether snow had ever existed and whether the events of the past twenty-four hours were not a bad dream. We reached Philippopolis without further adventure, where we were most hospitably received, lodged, and entertained by the British Consul Mr. Jones, noted for his invention of the iron band gabion, so freely used by us in fortification.

Mr. Jones was a great character, and we found the information he could give us most interesting and useful. It appeared he had got himself into trouble with the Foreign Office in the following way. He was, he said, a great friend and admirer of Prince Alexander of Bulgaria. During the recent trouble with Turkey, while the Prince was at Philippopolis with his army facing the Turkish forces on the frontier, King Milan had chosen this moment to declare war on and invade Bulgaria from the north-west. According to Mr. Jones, the Prince despaired of being able to meet a simultaneous attack both in front and rear, and therefore was inclined to ignore the Serbian advance, and remain to deal with the Turks. Mr. Jones, however, persuaded the



Prince that time allowed of crushing the Serb first and then returning to take on the Turk. The Prince eventually fell in with this proposal and, accompanied by Mr. Jones, led his army against the Serbs, routed them, and drove them back over the frontier, returning to Philippopolis in time to deal with the Turkish Army. For this slightly partial attitude on the part of the British Consul Mr. Jones had received a severe reprimand from the Foreign Office, which did not appear in any way to have disturbed his satisfaction at the result achieved.

When later Wortley and I sent in our reports, they favoured the Bulgarian Army on the whole ; it was then training under methods introduced by Prince Alexander, the advantage gained thereby in comparison with the Serb being markedly apparent. I have an idea that if the confidential part of these reports still exist, they would be found to give a fairly accurate forecast of how the Great War, when it came, would be brought about.

From Philippopolis we went on via Adrianople to Constantinople, where we spent some time, and I was much pleased at the opportunity of meeting Sir William White, our able Ambassador, for I had been told he was indeed the right man in the right place. Here also I met my old friend Gerard Lowther, afterwards a colleague in our Embassy in Vienna, and later Ambassador in Constantinople. I have always felt his early death to have been a great loss to our Diplomatic Service. Sir Henry Drummond Wolff was at that time in Constantinople on an important

mission. After some days there I left on a Russian ship for Sebastopol with the object of visiting my father's grave at Inkerman. At the time snow was lying deep everywhere in the Crimea, and I only found the grave with great difficulty after much digging and scraping.

When I returned to Constantinople and was on the point of leaving to return home, Sir H. Drummond Wolff asked me if I would take a "bag" containing most important dispatches. He told me that they were, in fact, the draft for a treaty with Turkey whereby we agreed to the evacuation of Egypt at an early date, which proposed treaty, I was delighted to learn later, had come to nothing, owing, I always understood, to some objections on the part of the French Government.

This was before the days of the Nish-Constantinople railway, and at that time the Orient Express started from Giurgevo and went, via Bucharest and Vienna, to Paris.

I went, therefore, by sea to Varna, and from there by train to Rustchuk, where for passengers and baggage a barge ferry crossed the Danube. As the train approached Rustchuk sounds of heavy firing were heard; the train pulled up for some time, but later continued as far as the ferry landing-stage. There we learnt that an insurrection headed by two Bulgarian officers, Bendereff and Grueff by name, had broken out that morning in Rustchuk, the object being the overthrow of the Regency and the restoration of Prince Alexander. In view of the importance of the dispatches I was carrying, I had, to my

regret, to renounce my original impulse to stay and watch this movement in Rustchuk, and I decided to continue my journey. But when I reached the ferry quay I found, to my disgust, that the boat was not running, for huge blocks of ice were coming down the Danube which, I was told, would crush it. However, I soon found a bargee who was willing, for a bribe, to take me across in his barge. No sooner was I on board the barge than it was invaded by a crowd of stranded passengers from the train, and we only just managed to push off in time to avoid being swamped. As it was, we were loaded up to within a very few inches of the water; the ice kept crashing against the side of the boat, but she stood it well.

As we neared the Rumanian shore I saw the river-bank lined with troops, the Rumanians having taken the precaution thus to prevent landing in view of the outbreak and fighting which was taking place in Rustchuk. The troops lining the bank gave every appearance of their intention to fire on us in the barge, but my bribe to the bargee prevailed; we continued our course and fortunately no firing took place. As we ran into the bank, I jumped ashore with my "bag" in my hands and found myself nearly up to the middle in snow and mud. To make matters worse, I was seized at once by soldiers, but luckily just then an officer arrived, and on my showing him my courier's passport he let me proceed. I could see the Orient Express, with steam up, waiting in the station at Giurgevo, barely a mile distant. I had taken the precaution to order a

pair-horse sleigh to meet me at the ferry landing ; it was there, and I jumped in and told the driver to go as hard as he could to the station. But as in the case of the barge, before we could start the passengers began climbing into the sleigh. I shouted to the driver to go for all he was worth ; he flogged his horses, off they started ; but alas ! the overloaded sleigh remained, the traces had broken ! However, the horses, who had pulled the driver off the box, were eventually caught, the traces repaired, and the passengers, seeing my plight, mostly left me alone, and finally I just reached the station in time to catch the Orient Express.

A point which struck me on that journey from Rumania to England was the immunity from search which my special passport secured me at every frontier on the Continent that I passed until I arrived at Dover, where some Jack-in-office insisted on seeing the contents of my hand baggage. On my expostulating, he told me that orders were so strict that only the previous week he had to ask Lord Salisbury to let him see the contents of his handbag. I am afraid I offended him by my incredulity, on the grounds that I did not believe that anything so ridiculous could have been tolerated.

## CHAPTER XII

VIENNA—BUCHAREST—BELGRADE  
1890—1895

THE EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA—THE KAISER—PRINCE RUDOLPH  
LIECHTENSTEIN

IN the spring of 1890 I was appointed Military Attaché to the Embassy in Vienna, with Bucharest and Belgrade added to my post. Just before I left London, while riding in the Row, I met General Sir George Harman, Military Secretary in the War Office. He told me he had heard that morning from the Commander-in-Chief, who wished me to be promoted to the rank of Major on taking up my appointment. The officer I was going to succeed was Lieut.-General Keith Fraser, of whom I had seen a good deal when he was in command of the 1st Life Guards. Promotion in those days was slow in the Coldstream, and I had served nearly twelve years (with two campaigns and the Staff College thrown in) before I got my company. I ventured to ask to be excused promotion offered merely because I was taking up a post, but was told I had no alternative, and when, a year later, I attained field rank in my regiment I was, to my surprise, rewarded by a brevet Lieut.-Colonelcy.

On first arrival in Vienna I lodged at the Hotel Imperial, which the Duke of Teck told me had at one time been the palace of his ancestors. Later on I moved to the Schwarzenberg Platz near by.

My first duty was to seek an audience of the



Emperor, and once that was achieved to ask to be received by all the Archdukes in succession in order of their precedence, which, considering their numbers, occupied some considerable time. Later I had to go through an ordeal that should certainly cure anyone of shyness if troubled with it, which happily I never was. In full uniform I had to visit the immense War Office building, penetrate, without anyone to introduce me, the respective offices of all the Heads of Departments, and with a salute and a clack of the heels to announce myself as follows: "Ich habe die Ehre, Herr General, Ich bin der neue ernannte grossbritannische Militär-Attaché [or as they styled it, "Militär-Bevollmächtigter"] Major Douglas Dawson." On that I was always received with a kindly smile, pressed down into a chair, offered cigarettes and made to feel thoroughly at home by the official I had burst in upon; and I can never forget the courtesy and kindness I received from everyone with whom my duties brought me into contact.

I must here diverge to recount an experience of my third day in Vienna which seems worthy of record as indicating the instinct of a dog.

I had taken with me my two collies, Scottie and Meg. That morning Count Clam Gallas (son of the General), whom I had met on my previous visit, called at the hotel and offered to drive me to the Prater for a ride. He had already sent on horses. I accepted with pleasure, especially when he said I could take Scottie with me. The dog was placed in the well of the phaeton, and off we drove.

On arrival in the Prater, Clam Gallas told me I must leave Scottie in the carriage, as since a dog had flown at the Empress's horse no dogs were allowed to run in the park. I thought he might have told me this earlier, and I reluctantly left the dog with the grooms. We were gone about two hours, and of course when we returned there was no Scottie. The men said that the moment I was gone the dog went mad, tore off his muzzle, and bolted. Now, a dog in Vienna without a muzzle is liable to be slaughtered at once, and I was in despair. I rushed to the Embassy, telephoned all over the place, but no news of Scottie. Having done what I could, I returned to the hotel a very sad man. There in the passage outside the door of my room on the second floor, with one paw lifted in apology, sat Scottie, wagging his tail.

Now, this was only the third day that the dog had been in Vienna. He had only been a short distance from the hotel before, and had never been in or near the Prater in his life. To get there he had traversed, in the well of a phaeton, some three miles of crowded streets (partly slums), which he could not even see. Whence came the instinct which brought the dog over a strange route to a new home from a place he had never been in before?

I had later another proof of this dog's sagacity, when, during my absence on leave, he tracked one of my horses to which he was devoted to a blacksmith's forge at the other side of the city, it being the first time my horse had been to this forge. My groom forgot the dog when starting;

there being a delay at the blacksmith's, he left the mare there, and returned to fetch the dog. The dog was gone. On returning to the blacksmith's, the dog was seated beside the mare. But in this instance, of course, Scottie had tracked the route his friend had followed.

Scottie was buried years ago, by the kindness of my cousin, in a glade within the grounds of Holland House, where he now rests in peace, as if miles away from the madding crowd. Long may he remain so !

Mention of Holland House recalls stories told me by my grandfather, who had been brought up there when a boy as a ward of Lord Holland. He had distinct recollections of duels fought in the park of Holland House. He told me how, once, on the occasion of an evening party there, he had observed an elderly lady paying frequent visits to the powder-closet adjoining the drawing-room, and how, finding her powder-box there during her absence, he had mixed blacking with the powder, to the discomfiture of the lady and the amusement of the company.

While I was in Vienna a litter of pups was born to Scottie and Meg, and I left behind me some of their progeny, given to friends. Years after I was at Carlsruhe for the golden wedding of the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess of Baden, when attached to the Duke of Connaught's mission to take the Order of the Garter on behalf of the King to the Grand Duke on the occasion of the golden wedding.

Amongst the festivities was a gala performance at the Opera House. Just before the performance

began I peeped into the Royal box, full of guests, including the Kaiser. A little lady, whom I saw must be of high rank, for she was in the front row, turned round and greeted me. She said, "You don't remember me, Colonel Dawson." I replied, "I am afraid, Madam, I do not." She said, "And yet I have still got one of your collies you gave me in Vienna." At once I recognised the daughter of the Duke of Cumberland, to whom when a child with her hair down her back I had given one of my collie pups. She was by then the Princess Max of Baden, wife of one of the few in Germany who, I always understood, never failed in his courtesy and kindness towards the British soldier-prisoner throughout the Great War.

In due time I received the summons for my first audience of the Emperor. As already stated, I had been presented to His Majesty in 1886 by Charles Kinsky at a State ball when passing through Vienna on my way to the Balkans. On that occasion Kinsky had related to the Emperor a story of my being run away with on a camel towards the enemy in a brush we had in the Desert during the Nile Expedition, from which I had then just returned. H.M. received me very graciously and at once alluded to the incident in the Sudan, which had amused him.

After many enquiries concerning the Queen and the Prince of Wales, the Emperor conversed on our military policy generally, and I was surprised to find him so well informed on the subject. He was specially interested regarding what he described as a "so-called" Army

Commission (the Hartington Commission), which had just concluded and published a report on Army Reform. His Majesty said he could not understand how such a Commission could be composed with one exception (Sir Henry Brackenbury) entirely of civilian members, and questioned the policy of so forming it. He discussed this subject in detail, and I replied with something to the effect that it was not our custom to admit the expert as the supreme authority, but rather the reverse. As an example of this I quoted the case of a retired officer of my regiment, the Coldstream Guards, at that time ruling at the Admiralty. The Emperor was puzzled but interested, and Count Kalnoky told me afterwards that the point had much exercised his mind.

During my five years in Austria the Emperor became increasingly kind to me. He always gave me such an impression of sadness and loneliness, and when one reflected on the awful tragedies which had successively embittered his life and destroyed his happiness, it was small wonder that those who had the privilege of knowing him conceived for him feelings of the deepest respect and sympathy, even though, to one in his exalted position, they could never be given expression to.

He was an austere man, of whom I found his subjects stood in awe, but beneath his stern demeanour I could discern a great kindliness of heart, with a dominating sense of duty both as regards himself and those who served him.

The Emperor was a keen rider, at manœuvres



nearly always at the gallop, and with three horses out he naturally tired out the single mounts of his suite and us military attachés. This was sometimes a subject of chaff on H.M.'s part. On two occasions at different manœuvres I jumped into a bog, and the Emperor's greeting to me in the evening before dinner was often, "Been in a bog to-day?"

Prince Rudolph Liechtenstein, Oberstall Meister (Master of the Horse), was a dear friend to me, and quite one of the most charming men I ever met. I used to ride the horses in the school at the Hof Burg, and got thus to know many of the Emperor's horses which came there for training. I thus picked up many hints on *haute école* of the greatest interest to me.

Prince Liechtenstein was often in attendance on the Empress while on her travels, and was with Her Majesty at Geneva when the awful tragedy occurred which ended her life. As he was on his way from Switzerland to make his report to the Emperor, he wrote to me, the letter of a man weighed down by sorrow and horror.

The Emperor's stud groom, Mr. Stiles, was an Englishman who had lived nearly all his life in Austria and he had almost forgotten how to speak English. Once while the Emperor was inspecting troops he suddenly made a volte-face and so faced the staff drawn up behind him, rather a favourite trick of H.M.'s. Of course we all had to change position. I was riding a big black thoroughbred mare I had brought out which I bought from Mr. Gooch, of Windsor, and which ought to have been a Life Guard officer's

charger. I had given her some education in the Hof Burg riding school, and I only rode her at ceremonial parades. I circled her round at a gentle canter, and while doing so I heard the Emperor say to Stiles, "Now, Stiles, that's the sort of horse I want. Why can't I have one like that?" My mare was of course of the hack stamp, and a very good one at that, whereas the Emperor was always mounted on the very best class of hunter that could be found; several, I discovered, came from Mr. Daly in Dublin.

As we all settled down again behind the Emperor, Stiles sidled up to me and, after various overtures, eventually offered me exactly double what I had given for my mare, which was already a big price. I of course refused, and for years continued to ride the mare as charger and hack both in Vienna and later in Paris. I have always considered that, so far as hacks are concerned, the Row cannot compare with the Bois, but even in Paris I think this mare held her own. My last mount on her was in the Diamond Jubilee procession, soon after which, to my great grief, I had to destroy her for age. Quite recently, judging in the show ring alongside of Mr. Gooch, I told him of the Emperor's offer for the mare.

In the month of May I used to accompany Prince Liechtenstein on his annual visits to the castle of Lippiza, perched on a rock on the shore of the Adriatic. Lippiza was the home of the Lippizaner stud, where mares and foals galloped about wild on the high tableland with its soil of sand and rock, which certainly lent itself to the hardening of shoeless feet. The object of



*Rudolf Liechtenstein*

*Adèle, Vienna.*

PRINCE RUDOLPH LIECHTENSTEIN



these visits by the Master of the Horse was to select two stallions annually to go to Vienna for breeding purposes. These horses were only suitable for harness work, small in size, perhaps deficient in shoulder, but with fine action and the most perfect mouths I ever felt; the breed was either white or grey in colour. I sent some of them over to England in exchange for some Yorkshire mares; they went to Windsor and Sandringham, and the Princess of Wales (Queen Alexandra) was very fond of them and used to drive them herself. Unfortunately I found, when visiting those at Windsor, that they had been cut short in the tail, to my mind quite unsuitable for this stamp of horse.

The Duke of Portland, who with the Duchess came to Vienna while I was there, took back to Welbeck some Lippizanners, and I believe the breed exists there still.

The Imperial stables in Vienna were on a vast scale. Rumour said they contained 700 horses and 400 carriages, but I never checked the figures.

On one occasion I had to present to the Emperor, on behalf of Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, then Secretary of State for War, our new and first repeating rifle, the Lee-Metford, which succeeded the Martini-Henry. My soldier servant (an old Guardsman who had been in three campaigns) and I sat up overnight practising and working the adjustment of the magazine, which was new to us, and next day I presented the rifle to the Emperor, in his small study at the Hof Burg overlooking a quadrangle open to the public.



After examining the rifle, and practising aiming from the window, the Emperor said, "Now show me the magazine work." I began splendidly, and all went well until my attention was diverted by seeing the Emperor dashing about the room picking up the dummy cartridges, which were flying in all directions. This was too much for me; it took my attention off what I was doing and the rifle jammed. I'm afraid I used a mild expletive, adding, "I knew it would do that." The Emperor asked me "Why?" I told him my servant and I had spent half the night practising the working of the magazine, and yet I felt sure that when the critical moment came, something would go wrong. H.M. consoled me in my distress, saying I had been too keen about it, and that I shouldn't be such a pessimist.

The Military Attachés were invited to all the military State dinners, which were given fairly frequently at the Hof Burg. One evening, on arriving there for one of these dinners, Count Wolkenstein, Oberkuchen Meister (corresponding to our Lord Steward), who always sat opposite the Emperor at dinner, told me that he had received orders that I was to sit next to him, and this practice was henceforth continued. The Emperor hated long meals, and during manœuvres, when we were very hungry, the servants sometimes seized on the plates prematurely. I had once been observed holding on to my plate, and I was at first alarmed, thinking I had incurred displeasure, and determined under such close observation to eat faster and talk less.

At these dinners the Emperor used to have

seated on each side a Feldmarschal-Lieutenant. These old Generals, overawed in the presence of the Emperor, and possibly much occupied with the good fare, hardly ever spoke except to reply, "Ja, Majestät, or "Nein, Majestät," to the Emperor's remarks, which curt replies after a time sounded rather monotonous.

From that time the Emperor used now and then to talk to me across the table, and question me on subjects of importance which sometimes were difficult to answer in public. I used to say to myself, "You must remember this is the Emperor of Austria you are talking to and everybody is listening."

On one occasion I am afraid I made a rather ill-considered reply to a question about one of our statesmen, at which the Emperor seemed vastly amused; but I made a firm resolve to be more cautious in future under such conditions.

When the Emperor visited Brück-an-der-Leitha (the Aldershot of Austria) for purposes of inspection, we Military Attachés accompanied H.M. My predecessor, General Keith Fraser, had impressed upon me to be always a half-hour before time when on duty with the Emperor, as no one knew when he would start or could keep him back when ready to go. The Emperor's train for Brück usually left at 6 a.m. One morning I arrived at the station at 5.35 and found the station-master waiting for me at the entrance. He told me the Emperor had just left and that my horse had gone on. I asked him why the train left so much before the time announced, and he replied that they had to start

the train the moment the Emperor set foot in it. When I enquired how this suited the traffic time-table, he said that the train had frequently to pull up after it left the station. That day I followed two hours later by *Bummel-zug* (slow train), and on arrival found my horse and my orderly waiting to show me where to go. As I joined the troops the Emperor was just inspecting a battery of artillery, and I jammed myself in among the Staff immediately behind him, trying to appear as if I had been there all the time. The Emperor, on turning round later, saw me. A smile came over his face and I saw that my late arrival had been detected. Not a word was said, but I was told that the train henceforth was never allowed to leave before its scheduled time. I quote this episode as an example of the kindly thoughtfulness ever shown by H.M. for those who served him.

One day on the way to Brück, the Russian, French, and German Military Attachés were with me in the Emperor's carriage, besides Count Paar, who never left the Emperor. (He once told me he had never been on leave for seven years.) During the journey the conversation turned on the Jewish question, on which subject H.M. gave expression to very strong views. He deplored the Jewish strangle-hold in Austria-Hungary over the rest of the community, and I specially remember one remark he made to the effect that if he were to drive blindfold through the streets of Krakau and Lemberg, he could tell through his nose when he was passing through the Jewish Quarter.

In course of the conversation the Emperor turned rather sharply to me and said, "Why have you got no Jews in England?" I replied that we had, and in plenty, but that by reason of our great captains of industry, merchant princes, and millionaires from the Dominions the Jews in England were not financially *hors concours* as in Austria-Hungary and Poland. H.M. got quite cross and said, "Mark my word, the day will come when the Jews will ruin England like they have ruined my country."

The Emperor loved open air but hated a draught. After the inspections at Brück the return train for Vienna usually left about 11 a.m., when luncheon was served in two long dining-cars as soon as we started.

One day, after four hours' galloping about in a hot sun, I selected for the return journey the rear car of the train, the Emperor being in the front car. In a perspiring condition I sat down at a table next the observation window in rear of the train, which window I let down and left half opened. I was just consuming a long iced beverage when a page entered from the front car, came up to me, and said, "His Majesty says there is a window open somewhere."

Experience gained during these visits to Brück, and also at manœuvres in Austria, and of armies other than those to which I was officially accredited, soon convinced me that in no country is so much attention paid to taking cover in attack as in England. Huge concentrated masses in column, followed by wave upon wave of them, regardless of loss, was evidently the order of the

day. Whence came the guiding spirit as to these "Kanonen Futter" tactics was easily recognisable.

On one occasion I was calling the attention of some of my colleagues to an incident of this sort, when some German officers approached us, asking what we were criticising. I asked them, "Supposing the guns had shells and the rifles bullets, how many of those advancing columns would reach their objective?" Their answer was to the effect that there were plenty more where those came from.

Most of the German officers I met in those days had never seen a shot fired in anger.

I recall an amusing episode on the arrival of the Duke of Edinburgh in Vienna, arising out of the punctilious observance of etiquette which ruled in those days in Austria. Proper respect to the honoured guest not only demanded sitting on his left in a carriage or at table, but the custom was even carried to placing the guest on the right whilst walking. To this day I still retain a certain feeling of awkwardness in finding myself walking on anybody's right!

On this occasion, after presenting to the Duke a large number of Archdukes awaiting his arrival, the Emperor started to walk down the long station platform, and at once placed the Duke of Edinburgh on his right, the Archdukes following. The Duke, fully alive to Austrian punctilio, edged round to the Emperor's left. The Emperor wouldn't have it, and did likewise. The result was comic. These two august personages edged round one another for the length of the station



platform, much disturbing the gravity of those following, especially the young Archdukes Franz Ferdinand and Otto, who were immediately behind them.

During my term of office in Vienna the Mediterranean Fleet under Sir Anthony Hoskins came to Fiume to pay a compliment to, and be inspected by, the Emperor. Had our Ambassador, Sir Augustus Paget, been present, he would have taken precedence of the Commander-in-Chief, and consequently I was ordered to go to Fiume in order to present to the Emperor the Admiral and his officers.

The flagship was the ill-fated *Victoria*, doomed shortly after, under a new command, to go down while manœuvring, with the loss of a large number of the ship's company. Sir Anthony Hoskins invited me to stay with him, and I spent a most pleasant week on board this magnificent vessel, which gave me the impression of an English town in a foreign country. To this day I feel a sense of horror at the tragedy which befell the ship and its company, where I had met with so much kindness and hospitality. My friend Prince Louis of Battenberg, whom I had once mounted for a day with the FitzWilliam hounds, commanded one of the cruisers in the fleet, and we used to land together in the evening and dine at the restaurants in Fiume. Prince Louis I have always considered the best-looking man I knew, and evidently the people of Fiume were somewhat of the same opinion, for they used to follow him all over the place.

When the Emperor arrived, as he boarded the

*Victoria*, I was standing near by to present the Admiral. After saluting the quarter-deck H.M. turned to me and said, "This is the first time I have ever set my foot on British territory." I ventured to reply something to the effect that it was to be hoped the next time it would be on British soil in England. The Emperor seemed pleased, but explained how little time was left him for foreign travel by reason of his many duties in his widespread dominions, which, he said, at any rate from a linguistic point of view, were far less homogeneous than our vast Empire. "Imagine," H.M. said, "only yesterday on my journey here I had to address my subjects in three different languages."

After the presentations had taken place, the Emperor spent some time going over the ship, chatting with the officers, and he seemed immensely pleased at the opportunity given him of visiting one of Britain's floating fortresses.

Later Admiral Hoskins very kindly lent me the dispatch-boat *Surprise* for a tour of exploration I had to make on behalf of the Intelligence Department. I invited Sir Augustus Paget to accompany me, and His Excellency and I spent a most interesting week cruising the whole length of the Austrian coast of the Adriatic, interspersed as it is by innumerable small islands.

I found later a confirmation of the language difficulty in Austria-Hungary to which the Emperor had referred.

One morning in Vienna I was as usual exercising my hack in the Prater, and watching various detachments of troops at drill. An

infantry company marched into the park, and when halted the Captain started to explain in German to his men details of the drill he proposed. He suddenly stopped and began sorting them out into three separate squads, which subsequently were each marched off in different directions. When sufficiently far apart, each squad commenced drilling under officers and N.C.O.s, who addressed the men in German, Hungarian, or Czech, as the case might be.

This episode interested me much, and I had a long talk with the captain of the company, who gave me much useful information regarding the difficulties they had to cope with by reason of the variety of languages among the troops.

#### KAISER WILHELM II

I had several opportunities of seeing the Kaiser together with the Austrian Emperor, when the former came to manœuvres, and it was peculiarly interesting to observe the relations between the two monarchs so far as outward appearances enabled me. The Emperor was always most affable in his demeanour, while the Kaiser equally showed himself extremely courteous, and one might almost say deferential towards his host, so much his senior in age.

At the same time, from remarks dropped in conversation with officers, I gathered that, at any rate so far as the Armies were concerned, there was no love lost between the Austrian and the German, and in fact one might almost say that with the former the feeling amounted to hatred. Memories of 1866, coupled with the swaggering,

patronising tone of the German officer, went far to disturb the relations which one would naturally suppose to exist between the two leading partners of the Triple Alliance. However this may be, careful observation of the attitude of the officers of the two Armies towards one another gave me an impression which can better be described by the word "hypnotism" than any other.

I remember specially an incident when for manœuvres, to which the Kaiser had been invited, the two Imperial parties were both lodged in the Castle of Güns in Hungary.

I cannot say that on this occasion much consideration was shown by the Germans in regard to the early hours kept by the aged Emperor. It was the custom to dine at six, and soon after the "circle" which followed the dinner the Emperor used to retire. Small wonder, for even I experienced the inconvenience of trying to eat breakfast in the dark often in the very small hours of the morning preparatory to a long day's riding. The Kaiser had brought to Güns a suite of some sixty officers, and one night, for long after we had all retired to bed, the quadrangle of the castle was full of German officers with the Kaiser in their midst, holding a veritable *Bierkneipe* and carousing in a manner which certainly did not conduce to sleep for those who sought it, as I myself found to my cost.

In the morning, when the two monarchs were mounted and met just before we started, I was near enough to hear the Emperor's greeting to his guest.

With his most charming smile the Emperor

said, "Gut morgen, gut ausgeruht Ich hoffe?" But the smile and the words were, I thought, tinged with a suspicion of sarcasm, not unmindful of the events of the earliest hours of that morning.

On occasions when I had the honour of meeting the Kaiser, H.M. was always gracious and affable. He spoke of my colleague in Berlin, Colonel Leopold Swaine, in the kindest terms, and I believe he had a genuine regard for him.

When in after-years, about 1900, the Kaiser came on one of his visits to Cowes for the regatta, I was among the guests at a party given in his honour on board an American yacht. On learning that Captain Mahan was on board, His Majesty expressed a wish to converse with him, and for nearly the rest of his visit remained in earnest conversation with that distinguished American writer on sea-power. The length of the interview impressed me at the time, and later I often wondered whether the germs of after-ambitions were not sown that afternoon.

During the Kaiser's visit to London in 1907, when he spoke at the Guildhall, I had the luck to be seated next my old friend Lord Lonsdale, immediately opposite to H.M. When in the course of his speech he referred to the statement he had made there sixteen years before, to the effect that his aim was above all the maintenance of peace, and when he added that he hoped history would do him the justice to record that he had pursued this aim ever since, I was startled by the angry tone and steely glint of the eyes which accompanied his words. When at the conclusion he glared round at his audience, his



tone and manner were such that I felt he might have added, "So much for you stupid Britishers. Put that in your pipes and smoke it."

At my final audience of the Emperor of Austria, when in 1895 I went to pay my respects just before leaving Vienna, His Majesty received me so graciously and talked so kindly to me as to my plans for the future, that I never forgot that conversation.

Just before shaking hands to dismiss me, he said, "You are now leaving us after five years' residence among us, and I can only hope that you take away with you as pleasant reminiscences as you leave behind you." As I backed towards the door, he continued, "Before you go, allow me to give you one last command, and that is that you never set foot in my dominions without asking to see me."

That day I felt I was leaving a personality I would gladly serve through thick and thin, and I often deplored that my after-life, so fully occupied, prevented me from having the opportunity to obey the command. Some time in 1912 or 1913, having in prospect a fortnight free from work, I asked Albert Mensdorff (Austro-Hungarian Ambassador in London) if I should try to go to Vienna. He replied sadly that it was too late; in view of the Emperor's state of health he feared it would be useless for me to go.

## CHAPTER XIII

### VIENNA

THE CROWN PRINCE RUDOLPH—THE MEYERLING TRAGEDY—  
THE ARCHDUKES OTTO, FRANZ FERDINAND, AND ALBRECHT  
—COUNT KALNOKY—BARON KALLAY

As previously stated, I had met the Crown Prince in England; before I arrived in Vienna he was dead, and under the most tragic circumstances.

Count Bombelles, who came to Kimbolton with the Crown Prince, told me at the time much about his life in Vienna, his aims and ambitions, from which I gathered that too much restriction regarding his taking part in healthy, wholesome amusement might, with his character, end in producing a contrary result to that which was intended.

At the time I met him he struck me as young for his age, and inexperienced, and I cannot say he gave me the impression that in so short a time he would develop qualities ascribed to him by Mr. Hamil Grant in his interesting book recently published, or that he would merit the remark about him attributed to Bismarck in M. de Bonnefond's *Drame Impérial*, which was published in 1888, shortly before his death. He had, when I saw him, a keen *culte* for birds and butterflies, about which he was extremely well informed, and not being allowed to join us in hunting (permission being sought and refused by telegram)

he spent most of his time studying the birds and their habits, while collecting specimens of bugs and butterflies.

And it so happened that shortly after my arrival in Vienna I came into possession of facts concerning the Meyerling tragedy which till now I have never considered it necessary or fitting for me to disclose.

I have read many versions of the story purporting to give a true account—most of them were hopelessly erroneous and misleading; and I have always sympathised with the natural reluctance of the Austrians to proclaim or admit that their Crown Prince was responsible for the double tragedy.

In view, however, of M. Paléologue's account of the story, told him by the Empress Eugénie when he visited her at her villa on Cap Martin (published in the *Morning Post*, June 20, 1923), making public for the first time the latter point, I feel I may now repeat what I was told by my great friend in Vienna, Count Eugen Kinsky. The account he gave me he had got personally from Count Hoyos, which story, the latter said, was identical with the report he gave the Emperor the next morning, he being the *only* person with the Crown Prince that night.

My information was further supplemented by what I personally was told later by the two brothers, Hector and Alec Baltazzi, uncles of Marie Vetsira, and brothers of Baroness Vetsira and Baroness Stockau.

The story, as I was told Hoyos related it, was to the effect that, having driven with the Crown

Prince that afternoon to Meyerling for the purpose of shooting next day, he dined that night *alone* with H.I.H. This appears to me to be authoritative refutation of the story that the Crown Prince had a supper party that night.

Prince Philip of Coburg was expected to join them at Meyerling the following morning for the shooting. About 9 p.m. the Crown Prince, pleading an early start next day, dismissed Hoyos, ostensibly to retire to bed, and Hoyos left him, crossing the quadrangle to his room on the other side of it.

At 6 a.m. next day the Crown Prince's Jaeger awoke Hoyos to tell him that the Crown Prince's door was locked and that no amount of knocking elicited a reply. Hoyos told the Jaeger the Crown Prince was tired, and said he should leave him alone until Prince Philip arrived. The Jaeger then said, "I ought to tell you there was a woman with him last night." Hoyos then went across, tried the door, found it locked, knocked, and got no answer. He sent for someone to pick the lock, the door was opened, but only wide enough for Hoyos to peep in. From what he saw he at once re-closed the door and gave orders that no one was to enter until Prince Philip arrived. He had seen Marie Vetsira lying dead on the bed, and the Crown Prince, also dead, lying on the floor half propped up at the foot of it.

Prince Philip arrived at 7 a.m. He and Hoyos entered alone. They found Marie fully dressed with a bullet wound in her breast fired at close quarters. Her clothes and boots were covered

with mud. It transpired afterwards that her *Fiaker* had broken down on the journey and the poor girl had walked some distance in rain and slush. She was lying covered with flowers, from head to foot—surely proof that she had died first.

The Crown Prince was dead from a wound in the head, also fired at close quarters.

Prince Philip's and Hoyos's first object was to dissociate Marie Vetsira from the tragedy, and with this intention her body was at once secretly removed and hidden in a cellar below. A story of a keeper jealous of his daughter's honour was put about. Then Hoyos left for Vienna to break the news to the Emperor and Empress. While he was with the Emperor the Empress came into the room. Shortly after, Baroness Vetsira arrived at the Hof Burg and asked to be received by the Empress. On being admitted, she said to the Empress, "I have come for my daughter." The Empress replied, "My son and your daughter are both dead."

It was resolved to leave no stone unturned to conceal Marie Vetsira's connection with the tragedy, and the problem was how to remove her. Finally, the Baltazzi family were told they might do so provided her death in connection with that of the Crown Prince was kept secret.

In the dead of night Baron Stockau and one of the Baltazzis removed the body to Vienna, driving through the streets in a *Fiaker* with her sitting up between them as if alive.

This is the story told me from sources as stated above, and I have always believed it.

It will be seen that it differs somewhat in detail



from that told M. Paléologue, notably as regards the supper party overnight.

I had met poor Marie Vetsira on my first visit to Vienna, and only in the season before her death her mother brought her to London, and I called on them at Claridge's Hotel. I was instrumental in getting invitations for them to several balls, two being given that week for the Prince and Princess of Wales, and the poor girl enjoyed herself immensely. She was a striking-looking girl, with beautiful eyes and a charming manner.

#### THE ARCHDUKES

My audience of the Emperor was followed by my being received by all the Archdukes then present in Vienna. Of His Majesty's two brothers, the Archdukes Karl Ludwig and Louis Victor, the former, a kindly, courteous gentleman but heavy in person and manner, was, I was told, entirely under the influence of the priesthood, and grave doubts were held as to what would happen were he to succeed to the throne; whilst his younger brother took no part in public life and preferred the society of the circle of friends by whom he was surrounded.

The Archduke Otto, younger son of Karl Ludwig and father of the late Emperor Karl, a very handsome man with attractive personality, was perpetually falling under the displeasure of the Emperor. Many stories about his vagaries were current at the time which are better left in oblivion. He died at an early age.

But of his elder brother, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand d'Este, I was destined to see a good

deal at various times, and as he was, on the Crown Prince's death, heir presumptive to the throne after his father, I was specially glad as time went on to get opportunities to watch the development of character of a personality on whom so much depended in the future.

During his youth he shared with his brother a rather doubtful popularity, by reason of the stories concerning their escapades. If all these stories were true they appear to have shown but little regard for susceptibilities, but I always looked upon them as quite possibly malicious exaggerations of the exuberance and thoughtlessness of youth.

I first got to know Franz Ferdinand well when about 1891 or 1892 he paid his first visit to England. The object of his visit was to express his thanks to the Queen for his reception in India, where he had during the previous year carried out a sporting tour. Devoted to sport and a first-class shot, especially with the rifle, he had there been entertained by the Viceroy and many of the ruling Princes, and he had thus had ample opportunity of indulging his ruling passion for sport. It was said that in India, when on a journey, he used to travel on the engine and seize opportunities for displaying his skill with the rifle as big game was passed *en route*.

I was appointed to the suite of H.I.H. for his visit to England, and I got a message from the Prince of Wales (King Edward) to precede him to England and prepare the details of the programme. Before leaving Vienna I had an audience of the Emperor, when His Majesty dis-

cussed the visit with me. On H.M. telling me the visit could only last five days in all, I ventured to say that the Queen might possibly expect a longer stay. I happened to know that the Archduke was rather bored with the prospect, and wanted to get back as soon as possible for the shooting. The Emperor replied that he had just promoted his nephew to be Major-General and given him a command at Budweiss, which command he wished him to take up at once.

On arrival in London I saw the Prince of Wales several times as to the details of the visit. Three days were to be spent at Buckingham Palace, followed by two days at Windsor, where the Queen was in residence.

We spent three very instructive days sight-seeing in London, visiting places of interest, theatres, etc., with a parade of troops at Wellington Barracks included in the programme. On the last day the Archduke told me he wanted to go out incognito alone with me, and drive for the first time in a hansom cab to do some shopping. I sent for a hansom and we started. As we drove across the forecourt of the Palace and just before we reached the gates, the driver whipped up his horse, which started off at a gallop, lashing out savagely and slightly damaging the front of the cab. The driver got her under control sufficiently to pass the gates without accident, and as we emerged into the Mall he called down through the hole in the roof, "Don't be afeared, gents, she'll soon settle down; she's only been in harness once afore!" The Archduke asked me what he said, and when I told him he shouted with

laughter. Wonderful to relate, we got through our drive without mishap; we visited a lot of shops, where the Archduke made large purchases, and I have to this day three little water-colours I bought that morning, including one of Ladas winning the Derby.

When we arrived at Windsor, the first night the Queen spoke to me immediately after dinner. The first words Her Majesty said to me were, "This is a terribly short visit, Colonel Dawson." I, of course, repeated the reason given me by the Emperor. Her Majesty did not appear wholly satisfied with the reply, and continued, "And why can't he talk a word of English?" I replied that in his own country he had many languages to learn. H.M. said this was hardly an excuse, and I then ventured to remark that I thought the young Archduke's bringing-up left in certain respects something to be desired. The Queen asked me in what way? I answered that in Austria they were considered to be too highly placed to belong to, and frequent, the clubs; that they seemed rarely to mix with the best of Austrian society, and as a result passed much of their time in a world which they would perhaps be the better for avoiding. The Queen appeared to be much interested, and talked to me for some time on my Vienna experiences.

This first close contact with the Archduke was most interesting, especially in view of the gradual change I observed in after-years as his character became formed, and later as the marvellous influence for good caused by his marriage developed.

When I first knew him I considered him gauche, brusque, and even at times ungracious, wrongly informed as regards European conditions, and certainly a convinced Anglophobe. After his morganatic marriage in 1900 with Countess Sophie Chotek, Lady-in-waiting to the wife of the Archduke Frederick, I am glad to record what a change that noble woman wrought in a nature evidently susceptible to good influence.

He visited London several times afterwards, representing the Emperor on various State occasions. At the time of several of his earlier visits the impression he created in London was prejudiced by his evident resentment at the non-recognition of his wife (by then created Duchess of Hohenberg) under which he was smarting. Then at last—but, alas! only the year before they died—this crucial point was happily settled, and during that summer they arrived together in England. At that time I was Comptroller, Lord Chamberlain's Department. I remember being rung up on the telephone by Lord Knollys, and told I was to accompany them the next day on a visit to Windsor. Being at that time rather overwhelmed with work, I ventured to ask whether some other officer of the Household might not carry out this duty, but I was promptly told I had got to do it. Afterwards I was never more pleased, for I got that day an absolutely new impression of the Archduke. His nature seemed to have completely altered for the better. Instead of an ignorant indifference, I found a lively and most intelligent interest in all he saw, a mind markedly more educated on all subjects



on which he touched, and a keen interest in international politics and problems. Most surprising of all, I found that from being an Anglophobe, he had now become an ardent Anglophil.

After an exhaustive inspection of the Castle, we drove all over Windsor Park and visited the Royal gardens, and I was astounded at his knowledge of, and interest in, everything connected with trees, shrubs, and plants. I told him of several celebrated gardens in England, some of which he afterwards visited, and I know that he ordered a rock-garden to be created for him in Austria by a prominent English firm whose work in this country he much admired.

I returned to London with them enchanted with my day, duly reported my experience, and that winter their Majesties invited the Archduke and the Duchess for a few days' shooting at Windsor.

Lady Dawson and I had the honour of being commanded to Windsor for that visit, and I again had opportunities of remarking the wonderful change that had been brought about. The last night at Windsor before their departure I sat next to the Duchess at dinner, and she told me, nearly with tears in her eyes, how thankful she was that at last King George and the Archduke had learnt to know one another, and how enthusiastic the Archduke was about the King. She concluded by saying this friendship had been the dream of her life ever since her marriage, and that she felt that henceforth the best understanding and mutual regard between England and Austria was assured.

Alas ! within a few months, in June 1914, these two on whom so much depended were foully murdered, and the crime was (by instigation the source of which was undoubted) made the excuse for bringing about the long-planned upheaval and the greatest menace to freedom ever known in the world's history.

How little we thought that night at Windsor that this was the last time we should see them, and who knows what might have happened in August 1914 if Franz Ferdinand and his wife had been alive ?

The aged Archduke Albrecht, Commander-in-Chief, I naturally met from time to time officially. Son of the famous Archduke Charles, with a war record under Radetsky in '48, and victor of Custozza in '66, he stood out among the Archdukes as the distinguished servant of his country. He was always most courteous to British officers who, by an arrangement I had made with General von Beck, Chief of the General Staff, and with our Intelligence Department, were selected by the latter annually to attend manœuvres. By this scheme, which I had suggested, we were enabled to choose officers of any arm in which at the moment we were specially interested, and provided we sent only officers officially notified beforehand by me the Austrians gave them every assistance within reason. I invariably made a special point of presenting them to the Archduke, and they were also pledged to make themselves known to any officer of high rank they found themselves near during manœuvres.

This arrangement discounted the irritation caused by the numerous British officers who at that time, without any status there, invaded foreign manœuvres.

When later in France I made, with some difficulty, the same arrangement with General de Boisdeffre, Chief of the General Staff, I found it not so easy to adhere to.

On one occasion, the General told me, two British officers, in knickerbockers and with pipes in their mouths, alighted from their bicycles in front of a Cavalry regiment halted in column and proceeded to walk down the lines as if inspecting, after which they left without a word to anyone.

On another occasion, after I had personally assured the General with whom I travelled in the train that the list I was handing him comprised the names of all British officers attending French manœuvres that year, he later in the day showed me a copy of an evening paper where, under the heading "Arrest of an Anglo-German Spy," I read that an English officer had been found sketching the Calais fortifications, when arrested and under confinement had been seen to swallow a document, and on release had left the Calais station for the German frontier.

On my urgent representation to the War Office, most stringent regulations on this subject were introduced.

A story of one of the Archdukes was going round about the time I arrived in Vienna, which, as a sample of courtier-like phraseology, I cannot refrain from mentioning here. Several daughters

had been born of his marriage, but a son and heir was periodically hoped for. On one occasion when the Archduchess was *in der Hoffnung* and the event appeared to be hourly imminent, the Archduke was anxiously awaiting news, having special regard to the sex of the infant, in the room adjoining. The Chamberlain, on whom devolved the duty to break to the anxious father the once more disappointing announcement that a daughter was born, entered the room bowing apologetically and thus conveyed the sad intelligence: "Ich bedaure sehr, aber Ihre Kaiserliche und Königliche Hoheiten müssen sich noch einmal bemühen."

## COUNT KALNOKY

So far as I understood the Austrian Constitution, three Ministers did not necessarily resign office on a change of Government, i.e. Foreign Affairs, War, and Finance. This was frequently described to me as the best form of Constitution under the conditions, but I inferred therefrom that the result of a General Election made little or no difference in the policy of the Empire, either external or internal, while it must seriously have weakened the position of the Prime Minister.

The Foreign Minister being the senior, Count Kalnoky, who held the office during my time in Vienna, was undoubtedly, after the Emperor, the most powerful man in the Empire. He showed me during my five years there the kindness of a real friend, and I soon learnt that between him and my ambassador Sir Augustus Paget there

was a bond which was not extended to the other Ambassadors. I well remember the parting between them at the station, when, under the terms of the age-limit, Sir Augustus was compelled to retire, and he and Lady Paget left Vienna, as they did amid general expressions of regret and goodwill from all who had been brought in touch with them. Count Kalnoky only left their compartment just as the train started, and while it swung out of the station I walked down the platform with him, and I realised at that moment what the parting had cost the two old friends.

Count Kalnoky used to invite me to his villa at Schönbrunn when he had little parties of five or six, always the most charming and cultivated of Viennese society. He used also to come to little dinners I gave in my rooms in the Schwarzenberg Platz. I thus got on terms of intimacy with him, which resulted in his talking to me openly about British policy, specially *vis-à-vis* of Austria-Hungary. He always spoke as if he were an Englishman and a good Conservative at that. The most dogmatical Tory of those days could not have expressed his opinion more forcibly than in a remark he once made to me in speaking of Mr. Gladstone's policy.

When I first met Count Kalnoky sixteen years had elapsed since he had been in the Embassy in London, but his memory of those days was as fresh and his affection for England as strong as if it were but yesterday. He spoke English perfectly. One of his earliest experiences as a diplomat, he told me, was being posted to Darmstadt when Lord and Lady Cowley were





March 30<sup>th</sup> 1895. *Kalnoky*

*Angerer, Vienna.*

COUNT KALNOKY.



there, and he used to recount many happy memories of them and their two daughters, afterwards Lady Hardwicke and Lady Féodore Bertie.

## BARON KALLAY

In those days Kalnoky's private secretary was Baron Aerenthal, afterwards Ambassador in St. Petersburg, and later the Minister under whose administration was planned and carried out the seizure by Austria of the Occupied Provinces Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This episode came as a great shock not only to those concerned for the maintenance of friendly relations between Austria and the rest of Europe, but also as disturbing the happy conditions created in those provinces under the beneficent administration of Baron Kallay. The latter, whose acquaintance I first made when the Prince of Wales, passing through Vienna, honoured me by lunching at my rooms and expressed the wish to meet him, struck me as one of the foremost statesmen in the Empire, and I was indeed fortunate to see more of him later. I look back with pride at the opportunities I had of conversing with this truly great man, and of watching later how the conciliatory methods which were adopted in the Occupied Provinces under his rule were gradually bearing fruit. And indeed he had in his administration a delicate and complex problem to face, and one somewhat similar to our own, when one considers the various races, languages, and religions which complicated the solution.

Of one detail on this subject I had ocular evidence frequently. The quartering permanently in Vienna of Bosnian and Herzegovinian battalions was a most popular move on all sides, and as I used to watch these troops marching past my windows, as they often did to mount guard at the Hof Burg, I wondered which were the prouder, the troops or the admiring Viennese marching alongside the band. Surely if ever the truth comes out it will be found that the reversal of Baron Kallay's policy was in some measure concerned with the disaster of 1914.

## CHAPTER XIV

### VIENNA

METHODS OF WORK—SIR HENRY BRACKENBURY—THE GERMAN  
MENACE—PRINCE AND PRINCESS REUSS—COUNT HERBERT  
BISMARCK—PRINCESS METTERNICH—MADAME SANS-GÊNE

WHEN I was appointed Military Attaché in Vienna I had already some experience of continental travel in connection with study of foreign military organisation. *B*

On my first arrival in Austria officially, General Sir Henry Brackenbury was Director of Military Intelligence, and as such, so far as the War Office was concerned, my immediate chief.

Although he had taken part in the Gordon Relief Expedition, I had seen but little of him hitherto; but as I got to know him well, I realised how fortunate I was to have the advantage of serving under him during my early days abroad, for I learnt from him much that was of the greatest use to me thereafter. For the post he held at that time he was, to my mind, in the truest sense of the words the right man in the right place.

By the time I came under him he had, during his five years of office at Queen Anne's Gate, completely reorganised a department which hitherto had lacked much that was essential for carrying out the important duties expected of it.



Shortly after my arrival I wrote him a detailed plan of the methods I proposed to employ for carrying out my work, to which he replied conveying his entire approval.

As he was leaving for India in 1891 he wrote me a letter containing a tribute to my work which I was much gratified at receiving. He told me that he felt he should confess that when my appointment to Vienna was under consideration he had strongly opposed it (of which I was already aware), as he did not approve of a Captain succeeding a Lieut.-General, and considered my appointment to be somewhat in the nature of "a job," but that before leaving he wanted to tell me that he was now of opinion that "he had never made a greater mistake in his life."

Such words from such a man it is, I trust, pardonable to quote.

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman also, when Secretary of State for War, expressed to me his high appreciation of my methods of work, as to which he told me he had given instructions for others similarly employed to work on similar lines.

I had soon realised that I had to rely entirely on my own initiative as the means of acquiring information, and I framed my plans accordingly. My guiding principle was to be courteous to all with whom I came into contact officially, to remember that each individual who approached me, however boring the subject of his visit, considered his business the one point on which my attention should be focussed, and above all never to let anyone, if I could help it, depart with a feeling of grievance. I set myself to make

friends, without regard to status, and thereby to ensure goodwill and possibly co-operation if in need of it.

My work abroad taught me lessons in organisation which were invaluable to me later on. For instance, I learnt that the principle of decentralisation, with a careful selection of lieutenants, is the key to success. The latter once chosen, trust them absolutely ; but should they fail you, let no false sentiment intervene. The late Sir John Cowans, to my mind the most recent and successful protagonist of this principle, was, during the War, my near neighbour in the War Office, and I learnt how much he felt depended on it.

Once while in Paris, in a moment of depression I told my Ambassador, Lord Dufferin, that I was getting disheartened as to the results of my work. He put his hand on my shoulder, and with the charm that ever endeared him to all who served under him, he said, " Don't despair, my boy ; no conscientious work is ever lost ; something always sticks, and imperceptibly leaves its mark." These words often comforted me when discouraged, and coming from him I feel they are worthy of repeating.

I always considered that work, to be efficient, should be combined with the necessary amount of relaxation. I never allowed that because I lost no opportunity of getting all the fun possible out of life, this should in any way interfere with hard work, with preference of course to the latter. In fact I tried to combine work with play, considering the combination not only possible but advantageous. Abroad, at any rate, the man

who in any walk of life is seen everywhere, and who is well known by both workers and idlers to be "thorough" in all he takes up, is to my mind of greater use to his country when in a foreign capital than those who cling together and are seldom seen except with their colleagues.

Once in Vienna I jokingly suggested to my dear old Chief, Sir Augustus Paget, that it might perhaps be of advantage if he gave the whole Chancery a half-holiday to go racing every Sunday afternoon.

It was not until I had been many years on the Continent, shortly before I gave up my post in Paris, that I got a unique opportunity of discussing this subject, when one day at the Foreign Office Sir Thomas (afterwards Lord) Sanderson told me that Lord Salisbury would like to know how I got all the information which I supplied.

I must admit that for purposes of work I owed something to entertaining, as I used to on a modest scale in my own rooms, and that during my twelve years passed abroad officially my slender income was thereby considerably depleted; but I have never regretted it, and never shall.

As time went on I became increasingly friendly with some of my military colleagues. With the French Military Attaché, Baron de Berckheim, whose wife was a daughter of Madame de Pourtalès, I was on specially congenial terms, and I look back with the greatest pleasure to my associations with them both; while in Captain Otto L. Hein, my American colleague, I found a true friend, for whose collaboration in our work



*W. Smith. June 1843.*

*Löwy, Vienna.*

SIR AUGUSTUS PAGET





I am ever grateful. He is now a General retired, and I am delighted, every now and then, to exchange greetings with my old colleague. General von Deines (who later became tutor to the Kaiser's sons) and Colonel Brusati, my German and Italian colleagues respectively, were also among the best friends I had while in Vienna.

At the time of my early travels between London and Vienna the railway service left much to be desired. The route generally used, via Queenboro and Flushing, involved numerous and tiresome changes. Once when journeying to London I took advantage of the delay involved by an unexpected change at Cologne, among several others, and telegraphed to Sir Augustus Paget, who was shortly to make the same journey, to avoid this route and advised him to travel by the Orient Express via Paris. On arrival in London I met at the Turf my old friend Prince Louis Esterhazy, then Austro-Hungarian Military Attaché in London. We there and then settled on a plan of campaign, to be conducted in Vienna by him, and in London by me, urging improved direct service between London and Vienna.

In a short time our combined efforts met with success, and the result was the inauguration of the Wien-Ostend Express.

#### THE GERMAN MENACE

One thing which influenced the whole of my after-life to the exclusion of most other subjects was the gradually dawning realisation that (1) Germany was bent on war when the moment was ripe, and (2) that they hoped when that time came

that England would not be found among their enemies.

Seeing that in Staff College days I had been taught that the Bismarck-Moltke programme (as worked out in 1864, 1866, and 1870) was to be followed by a fourth chapter in which England was to be the objective, while it was only the result of the seizure of Alsace-Lorraine which for the time called "halt" to the final act of the drama—this discovery specially occupied my mind.

The Military Attachés of the Triple Alliance in Vienna dined together once annually, their guests being representatives of the Austrian General Staff. To my great surprise on one occasion I was invited to join this gathering, which invitation I accepted, and I spent a most enjoyable and instructive evening. The conversation during dinner touched frequently on the subject of the next war. After-dinner speeches of an inspiring nature concerning the Triple Alliance were delivered, winding up, from German sources, with scarcely veiled hints that the one thing lacking to ensure its triumph when "Der Tag" arrived was the inclusion of Great Britain in the family party.

On later occasions, when talking with German officers, my eyes were opened on many points in this connection. "Krieg ist Krieg" was the refrain of their song, and "frightfulness" the essence of their argument. War on the civil population—fire, pillage, rapine, no cruelty is too bad. The end justifies the means. All is permissible, even advisable, whilst war is on—

“when once war is over, we all shake hands.” To this I used to reply: “But remember you’ve got to win. If you work on these lines and are beaten, when all is over, where are you, and who will take your hand?” They always met this argument by saying, “We can’t be beaten.”

I am conscious that to take seriously evidence which might be styled as coming solely from “irresponsible” officers would thus be open to criticism; but it is impossible to do otherwise when a suspicion once aroused—as mine was on the occasion above mentioned—is later confirmed in many quarters. Further, as regards the source whence came the words which opened my eyes that night, if I could here give the name it would, I think, be sufficient to dispose of any argument as to “irresponsibility.”

It is not surprising if, on such experience, now that the war is over, I wonder how people can waste time discussing who was responsible for it. Nor need I say that I lost no time in writing confidential warnings as to what I considered to be a grave menace, culminating later in an ardent advocacy of the National Service League, to which I allude elsewhere. And now I often wonder whether if, in 1914, England had been prepared even as regards home defence alone, the war would not have been averted, or at any rate deferred.

When later Colonel (as he was then) Grierson became my “pendant” in Berlin, we entered into close correspondence on the subject, and I found his eyes were also being opened in a way he had little suspected when first appointed

there. By his ever-lamented death in the first week of the War, England lost one of her greatest assets just at the psychological moment.

Alas ! in those early days, with one exception, my feeble voice fell on deaf ears, but that exception was, in the highest sense of the term, a veritable "host in himself," for he knew already.

Even at that time, and later during my six years in Paris, when home on leave I could never get rid of the uneasy feeling that we were taking too lightly an impending catastrophe. Sometimes when at dinner parties I looked down the table and listened to the hum of light-hearted conversation around me, the sensation that we were living in a fool's paradise, on the brink of a volcano, used to come over me.

#### COUNT HERBERT BISMARCK

When I came to Vienna, Prince Reuss was the German Ambassador there. The Princess being a niece of Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar, I went out armed with letters of introduction to them, and nothing could exceed the kindness and hospitality they showed me. I used frequently to dine with them *en petit comité*, and especially when my friend Count Herbert Bismarck was staying with them. Bismarck was then courting his future wife, Miss Whitehead, daughter of the head of the famous torpedo works at Fiume, and thus at that time he often passed through Vienna.

One evening I was dining there, the others present besides our host and hostess being Herbert Bismarck and General von Deines, the German Military Attaché. We got talking of European

politics, and Bismarck, with his accustomed brusquerie, suddenly turned on me and said, "It is high time England cleared out of Egypt. What would Lord Salisbury say if a joint note from the Triple Alliance were to demand the evacuation of Egypt by the British?" I replied that I was naturally not in the confidence of our Government on this or any subject. On his pressing me for my personal opinion as to the answer to such a demand, I said, if I had anything to do with it, which of course I never should, I would refuse the demand emphatically, occupy Crete to show we were in earnest, and beckon Russia towards Constantinople. With the Mediterranean thus converted into an Anglo-Russo-French lake, his Triple Alliance was, I said, confronted with an iron ring. He was indignantly dismayed, and said Lord Salisbury would never give a reply of that sort. While admitting that this was quite possibly so, I replied that equally I could not believe the Triple Alliance would ever take the action he suggested; and I reminded him that his father had always been credited with the remark that Constantinople was "not worth the bones of one Pomeranian Grenadier." I thought I detected a flicker of amusement in the kindly smile of Prince Reuss, and the subject dropped.

This incident was of course duly reported next morning to my Ambassador.

#### PRINCESS METTERNICH

Shortly after my arrival in Vienna an Exhibition relating to Music and the Drama took place



under the auspices of Princess Pauline Metternich, the daughter of the famous Count Sandor and one of the most prominent ladies about the Court in Paris in the days of the 2<sup>me</sup> Empire.

The Duke of Edinburgh was President of the British Section of the Exhibition, and shortly before it was open found it impossible to be present. I was therefore told off by His Royal Highness to act for him in his absence.

While the final arrangements for the opening ceremony were being completed, Princess Metternich asked me to dine, and specially mentioned that I should meet an old friend, Sir Henry Hoare. At dinner Sir Henry and I sat on each side of our hostess, and she told me much of her long-standing friendship with Sir Henry. We were talking French, and at one moment, not quite catching a remark she made, I understood her to be still speaking of Sir Henry, and to ask me how long I had known him. I replied that I was not sure, but that I thought about twelve years. She turned to Sir Henry and said to him *sotto voce*, in German, "This new Military Attaché seems quite a nice young man, but surely rather odd. I've just asked him how long he has been in Vienna, and he tells me he don't know, but he thinks about twelve years!" On this I thought fit to inform her in German that I spoke both languages equally imperfectly, and explained the mistake I had made, which caused much amusement. From that day, during my stay in Vienna, the Princess was always most friendly towards me.

When the Exhibition opened and the Emperor paid his official visit to the British Section, I had

to receive him on behalf of the Duke of Edinburgh. I conducted H.M. round the English pictures, among which was that fine portrait by John Pettie, R.A., of Charles Wyndham in pink satin dress, as Charles Surface in *David Garrick*, which picture now hangs in the Garrick Club.

The Emperor was much struck by the picture and asked me many questions about the play and the character that Wyndham represented. I explained so far as I was able, and mentioned that Wyndham had only recently taken a British company to Berlin, where they had played *David Garrick* in German. H.M. was intensely interested and asked me if I could not arrange for the company to come and play it in Vienna. I wrote to Sir Charles, but after some negotiations, for a reason I cannot remember, the idea was found to be impracticable and had to be abandoned.

The most attractive part of the Exhibition programme was the production of all the most popular modern operas, conducted by their composers. Thus I was privileged to hear for the first time *Pagliacci* with Leoncavallo, *Manon* and *Werther* with Massenet, and the *Cavalleria Rusticana* with Mascagni, each conducting his own opera. Of all those which I heard for the first time on that occasion *Manon* attracted me the most.

The charming music, with its fascinating refrain recurring throughout, the tragic theme, as it seemed to me a remarkable presentation of contrast between the heights of pleasure and the depths of misery, made a lasting impression on me. That the moral pointed by the sad story

was not missed by the light-hearted Viennese was brought home to us as we issued from our box the first night *Manon* was given. With me were my two old friends, Harry Higgins, and Hwfa Williams, who was staying with me at the time.

In the passage as we opened the door of our box to leave at the conclusion of the last act, we found a group of little ladies of the Corps du Ballet chattering together and some of them weeping copiously. On my approaching them and enquiring sympathetically what was the matter, all they could do was to sob out in chorus, "Oh dear, oh dear, we can never come to the opera again as long as we live!"

I have often regretted how seldom I got the opportunity to see *Manon* in London.

When during the *Cavalleria* the orchestra rendered the "Intermezzo" as only the Vienna Orchestra could do, I thought the audience would have gone mad. Men and women stood up on the seats of their stalls shouting and waving handkerchiefs, while Mascagni, who looked almost a boy, stood up bowing continuously his acknowledgment of its reception.

After moments of perfect turmoil the Emperor came forward in the royal box, and bowing, gave a gesture by which, I was told, for the first and only time an "encore" was permitted in the Opera House.

We had also in Vienna at that time Vandyck, the famous Austrian tenor, and Madame Renard, who took the prima donna's part in many of these operas.

I shall never forget that fortnight of divine

music, then mostly quite new to me ; the wonderful orchestra, which could only be compared to that of the Scala at Milan ; and the enthusiasm of the Viennese audiences. Truly they owed a debt of gratitude to Princess Metternich.

Years after, when I was in Paris, what amounted to an historical meeting took place. Princess Metternich came on a visit to Paris, the Rothschilds gave a garden party in her honour at their villa at Boulogne adjoining the Bois, and there the Princess met her two great friends of the days of the Empire, Madame de Pourtalès and Madame de Gallifet. The *on dit* was that the three ladies fell on each other's necks and embraced, and that, while chatting of old times, one remarked, "Ma chère, vous vous rappelez, n'est-ce pas, dans les beaux jours de l'Empire le nom qu'on nous a donné—Les Trois Grâces ?" Madame de Metternich at once replied, "Oui, ma chère, mais on avait tort, on aurait dû nous appeler les trois disgrâces."

The next day, when going racing at Chantilly, I had a compartment reserved in the train, and at the Gare just before the train started one of the three ladies, accompanied by her son, a smart and most popular officer, came hurrying along, looking for places. As they came to where I was standing on the platform I said, "Venez chez moi, je vous prie, Madame Disgrâce ; il y a de la place." The dear lady pointed to her son, smiling. "Pas devant," was all she said, as she entered my compartment.

About that time I was invited to luncheon with Madame de Pourtalès at her house in the Rue

Vernet. The only other guests present were the Prince de Sagan and Monsieur de Falbe, late Danish Minister in London. That little party always remains in my memory. After luncheon we lingered on until well into the afternoon, discussing every imaginable subject; we three men were completely under the charm of this most attractive and fascinating old lady, as we all agreed on reluctantly taking our leave. And our hostess told me afterwards what pleasant reminiscences she had of that afternoon.

Without a doubt the 2<sup>me</sup> Empire had well named its "Trois Grâces."

From my first arrival in Vienna I was most kindly and hospitably received. I had made many acquaintances on my previous visit there with Charles Kinsky and was already on most friendly terms with Count and Countess Tassilo Festetics, she being a sister of Angus, Duke of Hamilton.

At the many social entertainments to which I was invited I found that where dancing was concerned a man was handicapped by the customs then in vogue. My friends were more among the young married women than the "Contessin." The latter were shut up in a room called the "Contessin Zimmer," into which a prospective partner was expected to penetrate, abstract a partner, and after one turn drop her again in the Contessin Zimmer. I was not particularly shy, but this expedition into a room full of girls rather appalled me, besides taking time. I tried to persuade my married friends to dance, but they pleaded the prior claims of the Contessin.



Once at a ball at the Albert Rothschilds, after vainly trying to persuade two of my friends to leave the wall they were glued to, I asked them whether they would dine with me next week on my birthday, and if so, I said, I would get Drescher's band (the best in Vienna) to play during dinner and we could dance afterwards. They were delighted with the idea; I asked six or eight more couples, and then the fat was in the fire. My entertainment grew until eventually about 20 dined and about 50 more came in to dance afterwards. So much was it sought after that Princess Dietrichstein, mother of my old friend Count Albert Mensdorff, sent "Natty" Rothschild to tell me that Thursday was her *jour* when she received in the evening, and to ask me would I put off my "party"? I replied that Thursday was my birthday; and consequently I regretted I couldn't put off my poor little party, which naturally would in no way interfere with Princess Dietrichstein's reception, the veritable "Olympe" of Viennese society.

The evening came; it must have been my thirty-sixth birthday. Just before the Great War an Austrian friend, who was on a visit to London, told me that to that day some of them in Vienna still remembered my "ball."

The ladies liked the idea of a bachelor entertaining. What pleased most was the bath-room, with a cover over the bath, turned into a buffet, and my bedroom as a smoking-room. During dinner the company sang in chorus with Drescher's band, and at once began to dance wildly when dinner was finished. About 11 o'clock my Am-

bassador and Lady Paget arrived. I can see now Sir Augustus standing at the door of my drawing-room staring at those usually the most sedate and dignified in Viennese society dancing and singing joyfully to the strains of Strauss played as one could hear them nowhere else but in Vienna. Just as the Ambassador arrived my dear old friend Tony Apponyi, who had been found asleep in the smoking-room, was whirled into the drawing-room holding on to the arms of a huge arm-chair with his feet held tight by one of the Kinskys, who waltzed him in his arm-chair round and round the room, much to the confusion of the dancers. As I shook hands with Sir Augustus, he remarked that he had been many years in Vienna, but he had never seen and never expected to see "the like of this."

It must have been about 5 a.m. when I remember hearing the Schwarzenberg Platz resounding with the merry chatter and laughter of the departing guests. And this was said to be the stiffest society in the world. It seemed only to require a little something out of the common to arouse the true, kindly, merry spirit which I always felt was present among the many friends I made there.

There was in those days a restaurant, or large "Bier-Halle," situated in an open space in the Ring-Strasse, which was largely patronised by the middle classes and where at times I went with friends. There we were regaled with popular airs played by a first-rate band, while the light-hearted Viennese delighted to join in singing them.

It was the days when London was under the charm of the song and dance entitled “Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay,” and its attraction had even spread as far as Vienna.

And so it happened that on several occasions when the bandmaster espied me entering the place, the band struck up this popular air, in the chorus of which the audience joined uproariously. Once, when joking with the bandmaster about it, he confided to me that some of his clientèle actually imagined the tune to be the British National Anthem !

*Madame Sans-Gêne* was produced in Vienna in 1894 (in German), and it was my first introduction to this play. The leading part was taken by that marvellous and charming actress Madame Odilon. It made such an impression on me I went frequently to see it at the Deutsches Volks Theater, and in after-years when I saw it in Paris with Madame Rejane playing the heroine I always maintained that the Viennese production fully held its own.

One night I was at this play when an incident occurred which I think worth recording. As I took my seat in the stalls I found myself next to Count Neipperg, then a very old man. He was the son of Count Neipperg and the ex-Empress Marie Louise, and in the famous act where Napoleon’s Envoy pays her a visit, he saw on the stage an episode in the life of his father and mother which must have been of the greatest interest to him. Still more extraordinary, that same evening the Royal box was occupied by the Archduke Karl Ludwig, and H.I.H. was that night accom-

panied by his Chamberlain, Prince Monte Nuovo, equally a direct descendant, but a generation younger. The Prince and Princess, one of the daughters of Prince Kinsky, were amongst the best friends I had during my five years in Vienna.

Prince Monte Nuovo, on the death of Prince Liechtenstein, was appointed Oberhofmeister to the Emperor and the Chief of the Court Officials.

## CHAPTER XV

### VIENNA

#### SPORT IN AUSTRIA-HUNGARY—"SALATCHKI-FAHREN"—THE SEMNERING PASS

IN spite of the hard winters and frequent long spells of snowbound conditions, those months were in many ways the most engrossing for anyone who loved sport, for truly in Austria-Hungary the sportsman can indulge his hobby in a variety of ways, such as can nowhere else be surpassed.

Sport was undoubtedly the strong link between the Austro-Hungarians and ourselves, and of this I found many welcome proofs. At Pardubitz, in Bohemia, a pack of fox-hounds formed the attraction for many of the sportsmen in Vienna, while one of the Kinskys had started a drag in the neighbourhood, to the meets of which I was cordially invited.

The fondness for England among Austro-Hungarian sportsmen recalls to me General Count Nikolaus Pejaesevich, Inspector of Cavalry, a prominent rider in the Pardubitz country, who, although he had lost his arm in 1866, rode hard with a beautiful seat and hand. He spoke English fluently. He surprised me when he told me he had never been in England, but had learnt it from reading *Jorrocks*, and the *Sportsman*, which he took in daily. I have now an engraving of his portrait riding with hounds, in my opinion



the best example of a man and horse in movement that I have seen.

My work prevented me availing myself of many of the hospitable offers of sport that I received, but every occasion on which I could find time to get away for shooting or stalking I was rewarded.

Of hunting I saw but little, except with the drag mentioned above; but the covert and partridge shooting offered possibilities for "bags" almost unheard-of in this country.

One day, when Sir Augustus Paget had been offered a day's shooting in the neighbourhood of Vienna, he asked me to accompany him. We drove out from the Embassy, and there, within what might almost be termed the outskirts of the city, we two guns had one of the best days with partridges I ever saw. I always regretted not having kept the record of the bag we got that day.

The "bags" obtained partridge driving over the vast properties of Baron Hirsch, both at St. Johann in Hungary and Eichhorn near Brünn, at both of which the Prince of Wales was on several occasions an honoured guest, and in which many prominent British sportsmen, including Lord de Grey, frequently took part, were in those days proverbial. I can safely say that never in my life have I seen such perfect organisation for driving game over a given spot (sometimes a round eminence or mound standing up in the midst of a flat plain) from all four points of the compass successively, without a moment's loss of time except to change the position of the guns.

Mention of Lord de Grey reminds me of a remark he once made to me, so characteristic as to seem worthy of repeating.

We were shooting at Chatsworth. The guns were lining a very narrow straight ride in a wood of tall spruce. De Grey was on the left of the line, a gunshot from the edge of the wood, while I was next him just out in the open.

When the beat was over he joined me, and I admired the marvellous quickness of his performance, considering he can only have had at most a few yards of daylight to shoot in.

In his most highly pitched drawl he replied, "Ah yes, then you know for me such conditions are specially difficult, for I never shoot until I see the bird's eye!"

I have elsewhere alluded to the covert shooting at Bergenzce in Hungary, while I was a frequent guest of Baron Nathaniel Rothschild at Schillersdorf, where enormous bags of game were secured.

I paid visits on several occasions to my old friends Prince and Princess Pless at Fürstenstein, in Prussian Silesia, just over the Austrian frontier, and thus got experience of sport in Germany.

On one occasion there when the *Jaegermeister* (head keeper) was posting the guns, he put me outside a small round copse lined with dense undergrowth, and just as he was leaving me he called out, "Look out for a fox which has been reported to have been in here; in so small a covert you've a splendid chance to get him." I had no time to reply to him, as I would have liked to, that I would as soon shoot a man as a

fox and had no intention of doing so, but to my great relief the beat finished and no fox appeared.

At luncheon that day I mentioned the incident, and the conversation turned on the almost sacrosanct position held by the fox among British sportsmen.

By way of accentuating the point I recalled that, when shooting with a cousin of mine in England, a foreign sportsman had by accident shot a fox. I enlarged on the consternation which ensued and the steps which were hastily taken to bury the poor animal and to keep the episode secret. I had no sooner said this than I longed to sink into the ground.

One of the party, a prominent and most popular figure among the foreign residents then in London, remarked sadly that he was the culprit, and that in dense covert he had taken the fox for a hare. He was an old friend for whom I had the highest esteem and regard, and I had completely forgotten that it was he to whom I had referred.

With the well-known tact and charming manner for which he was universally popular, he did his best to console me; but to this day, whenever I think of it, I blush to recall the unpardonable "gaffe" I committed.

A sport I only once indulged in in Austria was the *Haasen Streiche*, or hare drive, where the long line of guns and beaters, flanked by wings thrown forward at the extremities, advanced for miles over flat open country free of boundary hedges. At first I was astonished to see the hares frequently rolled over stone dead at distances I had pre-

viously considered well out of shot, until I realised what the combination of heavy charges, choke bores, and an aim well in advance of the poor brute's nose could accomplish.

On this occasion, after walking straight ahead in the formation described for some hours, the bag amounted to over 1,200 hares. This was my first and last experience of this sport.

But the sport which appealed most to me was the chamois and deer stalking in the mountains.

I spent several days with Count Ernst Hoyos, the well-known big-game sportsman (author of *Zu den Aulihan*, of which he gave me a copy), on the Schneeberg range of mountains in the neighbourhood of Reichenau. We used to pass the nights in wooden huts built for the purpose, and started each morning at daybreak. I have now one of the widest-switch horn heads I ever saw from a stag I killed on the Kuh Schneeberg.

I can never forget one lovely morning, as Hoyos and I emerged from our hut, perched on a ledge of a precipitous height above the valley about 6,000 feet below us, the beauty of the scene as, with the sunrise, the mist below gradually disappeared, and, after an anxious sweep with the glasses, my surprise to find that chamois were jumping about not far below us.

Chamois drives at Jöhnsbach in Styria, the property of Count Festetics, were indeed a thrilling experience, and I must admit that though the stalking of the chamois was possibly more exciting, in one sense I preferred the driving; for stalking an animal whose habit was to frequent the steepest slopes, and just below the edge of the

summit, was apt to bring on attacks of "vertige" to which I had unfortunately become prone. To this cause I more than once owed the loss of a stag or chamois, when just at the moment a chance offered I was clinging for all I was worth to some rock or scrub and utterly unable to fire.

Once, during a period of deep snow, I had an amusing and interesting experience with my friends Count and Countess Anton Apponyi, when we went down a large party from Vienna to inspect the racing stud at their home at Marchegg, just on the Hungarian frontier.

I was warned beforehand to be clad prepared for rough work, as from the station to the house, a distance of some miles, we were to cover the route in the manner of transport known as *Salatchki-fahren*.

When the party met at the station in Vienna we were thus clad in short fur jackets, fur caps, breeches, and the long snow-boots worn on such occasions, which pulled up well over the knees, and which, a combination of felt, waterproof, and leather, with heavy nail-studded soles, enabled one to stand all day in snow without cold feet or other inconvenience. I have a pair of these boots to this day.

My old friend Constantine Phipps, Counsellor of the Embassy, who always loved a chance of seeing a racing stud, accompanied us, but by mistake had not been warned of the "dress" and arrived in the ordinary costume for a journey.

On arrival at Marchegg station we found awaiting us a four-abreast horse sleigh, to which was attached behind by ropes a long line of



impromptu-constructed seats or boxes mounted on runners at intervals of six or eight paces apart. Each of these accommodated one person only. When Phipps was gravely introduced to his "carriage" by Apponyi, he very wisely pleaded not being properly dressed for the occasion, and was placed in the sleigh alongside the driver.

The "carriages" nearest to the sleigh were allotted to the two charming ladies who accompanied us, Countess Roman Potocka and Countess Apponyi, and when all were seated we started, slowly at first to allow the line to tighten up, but the pace gradually increased until it approached a gallop. So long as the road was straight, all went fairly well, but at the first corner we turned, and often at bends in the road, the long line swept outwards in proportion to the distance from the sleigh, and thus the whole procession was scattered broadcast, with the occupants rolling in the snow. Much was the "grief," and still more the laughter, as ere long we were all covered with snow.

While progressing merrily between corners there was naturally much snowballing between immediate neighbours, and Phipps, comparatively safe in the security of the sleigh, was of course the mark for general attention, especially by the ladies who were nearest to him.

And so we traversed some miles of the flat country lying between the station and our destination, and I can truly say I never enjoyed a morning more. I often wonder why, on the rare occasions when we are visited by heavy and prolonged snowfalls, the mingled charm and excitement of *Salatchki-fahren* are not indulged in.

## DESCENT OF THE SEMMERING PASS

But as a winter sport my most thrilling experience was on the occasion of my first introduction to the toboggan abroad.

It was during the winter of 1890-91, a very long and severe one, that I was one day invited to join a party of Austrian friends who intended to make the descent in toboggans of the northern slope of the Semmering Pass, from the hotel which crowned its summit to the valley below.

I much regret I cannot recall the names of any of my companions in the expedition, but I think they must have been about six or eight in number.

I understood that, beyond a cursory inspection, from which the idea had seemed sufficiently feasible to make it worth trying, no detailed study of the exact route to be followed had been made, and that in deciding on the attempt a good deal had been left to chance. The height at the summit of the pass was some 3,200 feet.

After making the ascent in sleighs by the road which traversed the pass, which, so far as I remember, took us well over an hour's stiff climbing, we lined up our toboggans on the plateau close to the hotel with our backs to it.

In front of us for some distance, as far as a ridge beyond which we could not see, was a gentle snow-covered slope of open ground.

Before starting it was explained to us that from the moment of topping the ridge in front of us our difficulties would commence, for the route at several points traversed some awkwardly wooded slopes.

On the word being given, we started, and went merrily over the gentle open decline until we topped the ridge, when the pace at once began to accelerate, at the same time as I observed right across our route, at some hundreds of yards' distance, a wood consisting largely of, I think, larch and spruce. In a shorter time than it takes to tell, my whole attention was taken up in attempts to avoid trunks of trees as we dashed past them, and I could already hear sounds announcing that one or other of my comrades had come to grief.

Ere long my turn came. I went crash into a tree and overturned, luckily without damage to myself or the toboggan, for I fell clear in the deep snow, and the toboggan, having turned turtle, happily remained beside me.

After cheery and reassuring shouts from those of the party who still remained within hail, I resumed my course, steered clear through the rest of that wood, and for some distance the remainder of the route was more favourable. It was, however, interspersed with obstacles which required constant attention in order to avert disaster, and though later I got another spill in a spinney somewhere near the end, again without damage, I was glad enough at last to find myself at the bottom.

So far as I remember, no one of my companions suffered any serious damage, although in the course of the descent two of the toboggans got loose, went on riderless down the mountain-side and, for the time at any rate, were not heard of again.

To the best of my recollection after all these

years, the average time occupied in the descent, including falls, from which at one time or another, I think, no one escaped free, worked out at 20 minutes.

Should these lines be read by any of my companions on that morning, doubtless they would be able to correct any discrepancies which after this lapse of time may have crept into my account of an enjoyable and exciting experience.

From enquiries I ventured to make recently in Vienna, I learn, by the courtesy of Lord Chilston, now our Minister there, that there are to-day various toboggan routes on the Semmering as well as several hotels at the top of the pass. My impression is that at the time of our expedition there was only one hotel, and that I believe was closed for the winter.

This leads me to infer that the little band which I was privileged to join that day were the pioneers who inaugurated what, my informant tells me, is nowadays the most popular winter-sport resort in Austria.

Before quitting this subject I am tempted to call attention to a Viennese custom which might perhaps be followed in London with advantage.

During the winter of 1925-6 we had an experience which, though in these days a rare one, was common enough in my youth. I refer to prolonged frost, accompanied by occasional heavy falls of snow.

With the surface of our main roads as they are now, more like that of a skating rink than a road, it is not surprising that traffic was everywhere interrupted, while in hilly country locomotion

became extremely dangerous. Probably this is an evil for which there is no remedy, unless and until it becomes recognised that the pedestrian and the horse have equal rights with the motorist as regards the use of the roads.

But surely one of the most disagreeable results of such weather as we experienced that winter might be avoided if we took example from Vienna. I refer to the clearing of snow from the pavements in towns.

My first winter in Austria was an extremely severe one, practically lasting from November to March. In Vienna during the whole of that period, with the admirable organisation which years of experience had established, the snow in the streets was cleared almost as it fell, certainly sufficiently to provide for the needs of wheeled traffic. As regards those of the pedestrian on the pavements, a simple custom seemed almost automatically to ease the situation, for every householder appeared to be responsible for clearing the pavement in front of his house. In any case this was the general custom, which to me seems worth consideration.

When last winter I was told that London streets and pavements were for some time left in a state of slush, while the problem of how to recoup the unemployed, who would forfeit the dole if they handled broom or shovel, was puzzling the minds of the municipal authorities, I bethought me how, under similar circumstances, the sufferings at least of the pedestrian would have been mitigated in Vienna.



## CHAPTER XVI

### VIENNA

#### THE VIENNA JOCKEY CLUB—POLO IN VIENNA—STATE STUDS— THE "PARI-MUTUEL"

SOON after my arrival in Vienna I was elected a member of the Jockey Club there, where we of the Embassy frequently met for dinner and were most warmly welcomed by the members. The Club was in all respects a haven of rest after the turmoil of restaurant life in Vienna. But in all my experience of foreign clubs I never found the same homelike atmosphere that one was used to in London, and somehow one missed the serious tone of our clubs. To leave the Jockey Club in Vienna and enter the Turf Club in London gave me the impression of exchanging the merry heedless conditions of youth for the more serious problems of after-life.

Soon after I became a member, the Committee of the Jockey Club were most keen on introducing improved modern conditions, and they took advantage of the manager giving up his situation to ask if I could find someone who had been managing a London club to come out and take charge there. It so happened that the capable manager of White's had just quitted his place, and I suggested him for the Jockey Club; he was accepted and took up the post. His advent was the signal for many reforms which were much appreciated generally, but some of

the older members rather resented the introduction of foreign methods. As an example of this, one night, soon after the new management was installed, *bécasse rôtie* was included in the menu. The dish was cooked to perfection with the trail on toast, and three of us from the Embassy were singing its praises. An elderly gentleman, who was sitting immediately opposite to us, sent his plate away, with an audible comment on English cooking which I will not repeat. Other members of the Club present were shocked at his remark, and I must confess that to hear it made in the presence of my colleagues and myself aroused our ire considerably, but happily we were able to restrain ourselves.

This incident was, I am glad to say, the only instance of its kind that I experienced during my time there, and we were soon all laughing it off as a joke.

As is the custom at many of the prominent clubs on the Continent, what we call "round games" at cards for high stakes were then much in vogue at the Jockey Club. When I was nominated for Military Attaché at Vienna, the Duke of Cambridge sent for me just before I left. H.R.H. told me that I was going to a capital where card-playing was much indulged in. He added that I had been twice reported to him for high play at cards, and asked me, "What are you going to do?" I said, "What do you want me to do, sir?" "Give me a promise never to touch a card while you are in Vienna," was the reply. Of course I gave it, and thus broke for ever a tendency to which I had been addicted, and I

have ever been grateful for the kindly thought and word which prompted my doing so.

But I was witness of much high play at baccarat in Vienna and later in Paris. In Austria, however, this was sternly arrested by order of the Emperor, to whom was reported a loss of £100,000 at one sitting by one member of the Club to another. I was by that time in Paris, where the loser of this enormous sum had only recently been on a visit, and had already there experienced heavy losses. He was an old friend of mine from Vienna days, and when years after he and his wife came to stay with us at Medmenham and he recounted to me his sad story, he concluded by saying that it was certainly not "his year out," for after the Vienna episode he had retired to the country, where, while on a shooting-visit to his father-in-law, he had been shot in the leg and lamed for life.

During my residence in Vienna many of my friends there had consulted me on the subject of polo and the possibility of introducing the game there. A club had recently been started in Budapest, and the Austrians were anxious to establish one in Vienna. I was naturally glad, so far as I could, to help to start a game I loved, but my experience of Vienna taught me that though it might be easy to get members to join a polo club there, it would be difficult to be sure of the residence there during the summer months of adequate numbers to ensure success. While the subject was under consideration, Prince Hohenlohe, the Oberhofmeister, called on me and informed me that the Emperor

hoped I would assist to further the project, His Majesty having sanctioned the use of the Prater for the game if the scheme should mature.

This gracious message fired my ardour and I set about canvassing my friends for an assurance that we could find at least ten or twelve members on whom we could rely to reside permanently in Vienna during May, June, and July. I urged that without this I could not embark on getting my ponies out from England. But the habits and customs of the social world disclosed difficulties which were insuperable, and the idea had most reluctantly to be abandoned.

The Vienna season brought Society there throughout the winter, and in summer the racing community was there for meetings in the Freudenuau, but the attractions of country life and love of sport made the visits to the capital of prospective polo players, at the best, merely spasmodic.

Since writing the above I learn that a polo club was founded, with its grounds in the Freudenuau, in 1911, and though of course dormant during the War, it was revived in 1925.

Of the early hours kept in Vienna, the closing of doors by the concierge at 10 p.m. was a sign of the times, and frequently a source of inconvenience to anyone who dined out at 8. The Emperor's banquets took place at 7 p.m. at latest, the natural result of H.M. retiring and rising at his customary early hours. One night I was due to dine with the Archduke Albrecht, his dinner hour being 6 p.m. During the course of the day I received a telegram from Charles Kinsky, sent while on his way from London, saying he arrived that

evening by Orient Express and would I meet him at the Jockey Club and we could dine together at 8.30. After reflection I solved the problem by dining first with the Archduke at 6, and I was only slightly late in arriving at the Club in time for a second dinner two and a half hours after. I exercised strict moderation gastronomically and thus escaped ill effects.

#### THE HUNGARIAN STATE STUDS

I always had at heart the conditions in England regarding horse-supply, especially for war needs, and both in dispatches and private letters I had deplored the disregard shown of this important subject at home. To the War Office and to members of our Jockey Club I pointed out from time to time the tremendous strain put upon our resources through purchases by foreign Government representatives, not only of blood stock at Newmarket sales and elsewhere, but also of mares, chiefly in the North of England. As an example of what I meant, I had called attention to the frequent visits to Newmarket of Count Lehndorff and his large purchases of brood mares and blood stock on behalf of the German Government.

I made a careful study of the vast system of State studs which existed in Austria-Hungary, and I was engaged on a report on the Hungarian studs when Mr. Chaplin, at that time at the head of our Board of Agriculture, arrived in Vienna. Mr. Chaplin, later Viscount Chaplin, had always been most friendly towards me, and when we foregathered in Vienna I easily persuaded him





[Pietzner, Vienna.]

VIENNA, 1892.

Captain Otto L. Hein and Lieut.-Colonel Douglas Dawson, United States and  
British Military Attachés.



to accompany me during a tour of the studs in Hungary which I had just planned. The experience gained during this tour was not lost on so shrewd a judge of the subject, and Mr. Chaplin returned to England fully convinced that the question of horse supply should be at once seriously taken up at home. I had, however, to remind him that the conditions he had seen were brought about by State subvention on a large scale, that these stud farms were run and managed by the Military, and that any attempt to reproduce in England a system on the same lines would absorb a very large proportion of the personnel available.

As I feared, the subject aroused only a half-hearted interest at home, both then and later, when in Paris I once more invited consideration of the widespread attention given to the subject in France. When war burst on us in 1914, the result of years of apathy revealed such alarming disproportions as to the horse supply available in England compared with France, that though I know something of the figures I prefer to leave them to the imagination.

Since writing the above I received from my friend Sir Theodore Cook, with whom I have several times discussed this subject, a copy of a brochure (reprint from the *Field* of November 12, 1910) containing much useful information about Hungarian studs, together with detailed figures of a proposed system for provision of remounts in this country.

I only hope the effort of the *Field* in this important direction is receiving the support it

deserves, for though motor traction may by now be largely supplanting the uses of the horse in war, every soldier knows that in certain cases they can never be wholly eliminated, while evidence I have got personally from farmers inclines me to believe that a similar necessity still exists in civil life.

It was during our tour in Hungary that an episode occurred which I cannot refrain from referring to. A large party arrived in Vienna, amongst whom were the Duchess of Manchester, Lady Randolph Churchill, Lady Feodore Sturt, M. de Soveral (our most popular Portuguese Minister in London), Lord Hartington, and several other friends. It was arranged that they should join Harry Chaplin and me in Budapest, and they met us there, accompanied by Constantine Phipps, then our Councillor of Embassy in Vienna. We spent a most enjoyable time in Pesth, our days being occupied by excursions in the neighbourhood, interspersed by race-meetings, at which we were always most kindly looked after by my good friend Count Elemer Batthyany, President of the Hungarian Jockey Club, who, I am glad to say, was at that time elected a member of our Jockey Club.

One day, when we had all visited one of the stud farms, on starting to return home I found myself alone with Soveral and Phipps, we three having missed the rest of the party. After hunting everywhere for them, we could only presume they had driven off, imagining we were in one or other of the carriages, which indeed turned out to be the case. We were in despair,

for the last train for Pesth left some very distant station at an hour which made it impossible for us to arrive in time to catch it. Phipps suggested we should drive at once to a small station comparatively handy and try to exercise our persuasive powers to stop some express train passing through on its way to Pesth.

Alas ! when we reached the station we found a small, modest building, solitary in a vast plain, with every sign that the staff had vacated the place under the impression their duties for the day were finished. However, eventually we unearthed the station-master and a sleepy porter ; it was by then night-time and pitch dark. All Phipps's blandishments in Hungarian failed to persuade the official, who, though most civil, naturally feared the result of a breach of orders, such as we requested.

In vain we explained the quandary in which we were placed, backed by statements of our official position and assurances that we would relieve him of all responsibility and take it on ourselves. While we were arguing in the station-master's office the roar of an approaching train was heard, and on tearing out to the platform I saw the headlights and glare of a long train rushing towards us at a distance of about a mile.

There was no time to be lost. Luckily the porter, in view of the possibility that his chief might relent, had armed himself with a red lamp, which I snatched from his hands and waved frantically from the platform across the line. A grinding noise with grunts and shrieks from the engine



rewarded the effort ; the train slowed down and stopped abruptly just before it reached the platform. We tore along the line and clambered into it, while volleys of enquiry coupled with strange oaths came from nearly every window along the train. It turned out to be the train in which was the rest of our party, who on arrival in Pesth were surprised to see us. After explanations between station-master and guard we started again, but the latter, an irascible specimen of his class, paid a visit to our compartment and we experienced a *mauvais quart d'heure* at the start. However, our explanations poured oil on the waters, and by the time we arrived in Pesth all was calm, subject to a report to the authorities there. Here we met with great civility, tempered by allusions to the serious offence we had committed and the possible consequences which might result to the official concerned.

And indeed when next day Phipps and I called at the head office of the railway, we found it difficult to obtain a complete acquittal for the poor station-master. However, a liberal use of the words "Conseiller d'Ambassade d'Angleterre" and "Gross-Britannische Militär Bevollmächtigte" achieved our object, the official was exempted from blame, and we parted from the courteous Hungarian authorities with much mutual smiling and handshaking.

#### THE PARI-MUTUEL

During Mr. Chaplin's visit I had several opportunities of broaching to him another subject on

which I was very keen. I showed him the working of the "pari-mutuel" system on the race-courses at Vienna and Budapest. I urged him to take note what a huge sum could be raised thereby, not only for Jockey Club but for State purposes, if something on these lines could be adopted in England. When, as I expected, he talked of "the Nonconformist conscience," I reminded him that the argument that the "pari-mutuel," if introduced, would "legalise" betting was really already discounted. No one who attends race-meetings in England and listens to the roar of the Ring can deny that if the practice of betting is illegal, it is winked at by the authorities, and only sheer hypocrisy can pretend it is not.

When recently a tax on betting was mooted, I hoped at last that something might result, for if entertainment tax is levied, surely the race-course and football spectators would not be hardly treated if taxed on their form of amusement.

Mr. Chaplin went home much impressed with the idea, but alas! again I fear he met with apathy if not opposition, for nothing came of it. And even now, with the betting practice increasing by leaps and bounds, there seems to be no one with the courage to revive the subject seriously.

*Later. June 1926.*

Since I wrote the above some time has elapsed and I am glad to see that there are now signs that as regards this subject courage and common sense will at last prevail. As to the objections

on moral grounds, I would again submit that surely it is more honest to legalise a practice which for years has been publicly countenanced on every racecourse in England, and thereby ameliorate the conditions whereby it is carried on.

With reference to the numerous arguments, other than those on moral grounds, which have been raised against a tax on betting on the lines now proposed, many years' experience of racing abroad in various countries leads me to believe that the adoption of the pari-mutuel system *pur et simple* (what we call the totalisator), as now in vogue all over the Continent, would meet most of them. The difficulties of collection, already apparent, are thereby simplified automatically, while no one can deny that it affords to the public a fair record of the odds.

As regards the question of hardship to bookmakers' business, I have watched the combination of pari-mutuel and bookmakers on many racecourses all over the Continent working harmoniously alongside of one another, with the impression that little or no difference to the interests of either is caused thereby. I refer here to the fraternity of bookmakers with established reputation and status, for the institution of the totalisator would obviously tend to eliminate certain elements, possibly to the advantage of the public.

Where the pari-mutuel is working I have always found that owners and regular habitués of the racecourse prefer the facilities offered by the bookmaker, whom they know, to the machinery of the pari-mutuel, while the general

public find in the latter a fair and convenient means of backing their fancy.

Indeed, my own personal experience of the pari-mutuel, the only time I ever tried it, was not encouraging enough to tempt me to repeat the process. One day, fancying an outsider in a big handicap at Longchamps, I decided at the last moment to try the "machine." I approached the *guichet* and, just as I tendered my note, the flag must have dropped, for the shutter went down in my face with a bang. The horse won, its price 11 to 1, and I decided in future to adhere to my friends of the ring.

Whatever can be said on either side in this controversy, to my mind one thing is certain: if ever a system of pari-mutuel (totalisator) were to be established in this country, the profits accruing therefrom will be a most agreeable surprise both to the Jockey Club and to the Exchequer, with a proportionate relief to the tax-payer; and this at a cost to no one except to those who, in pursuit of their amusement, choose to incur a charge so minute as to be almost imperceptible.

## CHAPTER XVII

### VIENNA

AUSTRIAN ETIQUETTE—DUELLING IN POLAND—COUNT POTOCKI  
—COUNT FESTETICS—THE AUSTRIAN DERBY—THE DISTANZ RITT

I HAVE already alluded to some of the old-fashioned customs prevalent in Vienna in my time. The early hours kept; the habit while walking of placing one's companion on the right, which still sticks to me; the practice of asking only girls to dance at a ball, while the young married women sat immovable, all seemed strange to me at first. Again, while playing lawn tennis at the Club in the Prater, to have to break off a set every time a lady arrived and joined the spectators, either to greet or to be introduced, seemed to me, to put it politely, hyper-chivalrous, and it was certainly a great bore.

But the punctilio observed concerning duels was peculiarly interesting to me.

On one occasion a duel resulted from a trifling dispute at lawn tennis in the Club. Bill (later the Hon. Sir William) Barrington, then Councillor of our Embassy, and I were playing in the set. The dispute arose between our respective partners, one Austrian, the other Hungarian, and it even got so far as blows struck with rackets across the net. Naturally a duel resulted, from which Barrington and I were politely kept clear



on account of our nationality. We all left the Club as soon as we could that afternoon. I heard no more of the episode until the next day I was the object of a formal visit by the seconds to inform me officially of the result, and to assure me that all claims which honour demanded had that morning been rigidly carried out on both sides. I am glad to say that in this instance no harm was suffered by either of the combatants.

No such happy issue, however, can I record of a fracas I saw while staying with my friends the Roman Potockis in Poland. The brothers Counts Roman and Josef Potocki had married sisters, Princesses Radziwill; the former had inherited the Austrian, and the latter the Russian, family property in Poland. The Roman Potockis lived in a palatial schloss called Lançut, near Lemberg; they were always the best and kindest of friends to me, and I was frequently a welcome guest at Lançut.

Once during my visit there my hosts gave a great ball in Lemberg, which brilliant entertainment was marred by an unfortunate episode at supper-time.

One of the strictest rules of etiquette is that a gentleman must never be seated next a lady without having been formally introduced. When I first came to Vienna, Keith Fraser, whom I succeeded, warned me how necessary it was to bear this in mind at dinner parties. On this occasion, as the foreigner, I found myself placed next my charming hostess at supper, and, just as we were sitting down, I observed Count ——

Potocki, cousin of our host, wandering up and down on the opposite side of the long table looking very perturbed.

I remarked to Countess Potocka that her cousin appeared to be in search of someone, and she passed it off as probably something unimportant. From what I afterwards learnt, Potocki had found himself placed at the table next to a lady to whom he had not been introduced, and, it seems, he spent some time wandering round the room to try to find the lady's husband to present him. Failing in this, and seeing no one handy suitable for the purpose, he gave it up, resigned himself to the situation, sat down, and talked to the lady, whom he found a most agreeable neighbour, during supper.

Just after re-entering the ballroom, when supper concluded, and before dancing had commenced, a little knot of men, including Potocki and myself, was standing in the centre of the room engaged in conversation. An infuriated gentleman pushed his way into the circle, strode up to Potocki, and said to him, "C'est vrai, Monsieur, n'est-ce pas, que vous avez des cors——"; with that he stamped on Potocki's foot with all his force, sufficient to crush it.

It appeared that immediately after supper the lady had informed her husband that Count Potocki had spoken to her without being introduced.

Early next morning poor Potocki was run right through the stomach, a very serious wound from which happily he eventually recovered.

I can well remember the cause for reflection which this incident gave me, and during the rest of my time in Poland (and I frequently visited my good friends there) I was most punctilious in trying to conform to an etiquette which in many ways is so foreign to our customs.

Lançut was within a few miles of the Russian frontier, and even in those days the shadow of war was ever present, for just across the border were quartered masses of Russian cavalry, necessitating a proportionate garrison on the Austrian side. The Russian Polish neighbours used frequently to come across the frontier to Lançut, and on these occasions were like schoolboys out for a holiday, for in Russian Poland they were not even allowed to talk Polish. As may be imagined, their native language was freely indulged in, once over the frontier.

In Poland I found some similarity to English rural conditions, large areas of grazing land, which in places was interspersed with open brooks. Hedges were certainly few and far between, but otherwise these conditions, for anyone fond of hunting, naturally lent themselves to sport, and I took part in several rides where the water jumping reminded me of the Meynell country at home. Countess Potocka had quite a stud of hunters, some of Mr. Daly's from Ireland, and she rode boldly across country. Her stud groom was an Englishman I had known at Melton, when he was with "Gishy" Kaunitz in the same capacity—a very smart man with a beautiful seat on a horse. One day, when he was following Countess Potocka and me over an

open brook, he went souse into the water, which amused us vastly.

Count Roman drove a team, was a keen shot, and in every sense a sportsman.

One day when I was at Lançut my host asked me if I would like to accompany him on what he called "a day's business farming." This turned out to entail a long train journey all round the country in a *Bummelzug*, or slow train, which occupied most of a day.

We stopped at every station we passed, and as the train pulled up at the platform Roman jumped out, and was immediately in earnest conversation with a group of long-haired, greasy-curved Jews in gabardines, evidently awaiting his arrival. Much argument and gesticulation ensued, which lasted until just before the train started again, when at the last minute Roman jumped in, remarking to me "good" or "bad business there." On the former he enlarged, stating so many thousand gulden made, as the case might be. I soon discovered that these conversations related to the sale of crops. It was to me a revelation as to methods of business in farming, and it was also an object-lesson, for he explained to me that in Poland, and also in Hungary, you could neither buy nor sell anything, from a crop of hay to a horse, or even a piano, without the intermediary of the Jew, who, as I had often heard before, had his grasp over the whole community.

I began to realise the point so strongly emphasised by the Emperor in a conversation I have alluded to elsewhere.

Among those of whom I retain most pleasant memories of those days, Count and Countess Tassilo Festetics will ever be present in my recollections. From the moment I arrived, nothing could exceed the warm, friendly spirit in which they welcomed me. I was a frequent guest at their stately château Keszthely, on the borders of the Platten See in Hungary; and also at Bergenze, where the Prince of Wales had been entertained for stalking and covert shooting. At both places sport was the dominant consideration. From Keszthely deer stalking was to be had within easy distance of the house, and I have even gone out stalking there in the evening after early dinner. The experience of stalking primed with champagne was new to me. At Bergenze deer abounded in the huge forest by which it was surrounded, but here stalking was only possible in the "roaring season." In dense covert, when guided only by sound, the problem lay in approaching the quarry.

Wide grass-tracks ran throughout the forest, and the deer being accustomed to the rumble of carts along them, my host had improvised a means of transport to meet the occasion. This consisted of a carriage, shaped like a very long and low-hung Irish car, with the step quite close to the ground. With this vehicle, the springs (if any) and wheels arranged so as to cause a sound similar to that of a cart passing, close access to the deer was feasible, and, when a stag was heard roaring in the forest, every facility for alighting, even while on the move, was afforded.



At Bergenzce also large bags of pheasants, when covert shooting, were the custom. One day I remember, when, with a very few guns and only shooting cocks, the bag totalled roughly a thousand head ; and what it would have been had we been shooting hens may be left to the imagination.

#### THE AUSTRIAN DERBY

Count Festetics bred blood-stock at Keszthely, and once, when I was visiting the paddocks there with him, he called my attention to a promising-looking foal, out of one of his favourite mares. When I admired him, my host suggested naming him after me, and he was thereupon given the name of "Douglas." As a two-year-old he turned out rather backward, but in the following year his form was looked on as giving him a fair chance in the Austrian Derby, for which he was entered. When the race came off in the Freudenau, near Vienna, I had a nice little bet about him "both ways." All went well for about a mile, and I saw my namesake lying well and going strong when the field disappeared behind a small spinney between the stand and the course. When the field emerged again into the open, to our astonishment, it consisted of only three straggling competitors, all that remained out of a field of roughly a dozen starters. We rushed from the stand to the scene, where we found a disaster had taken place. It was raining, the going was greasy, and coming round a bend into the straight for home the leading horse had slipped and fallen, those immediately behind went

over him, and thus all but three of the field came to grief. And, worst of all, I found poor Douglas had broken his back, and he had at once to be destroyed. The jockey who rode him (Milne), falling clear, luckily escaped with slight injuries. He told me later that when the accident happened Douglas had won the race. A picture of the catastrophe was painted, of which I have a copy now hanging in my room.

While I was in Vienna there took place the great competition between German and Austrian officers called the "Distanz Ritt."

I am hazy, at this long interval of time, as to the conditions, but the competition consisted of a race from Berlin to Vienna and simultaneously from Vienna to Berlin by Cavalry officers of both nations in fighting kit; arrivals were carefully checked and marks allotted, special regard being paid to the condition of each horse on arrival. It was a sporting event which aroused much enthusiasm at the time, and it undoubtedly provided the competitors with opportunity for most useful experience and instruction. The distance was covered in the shortest time by an Austrian officer; but as the longest time also fell to an Austrian, from a racing point of view there was not much in it either way. But the state in which some of the horses arrived considerably marred the amenities of the contest and revealed a sad lack of horse-mastership.

About this time a Jewish gentleman of exceptionally bulky proportion, well known in sporting circles and chiefly renowned for his appetite, devoured for luncheon at the Hotel

Imperial the whole of a large-sized leg of mutton at one sitting. He was henceforth known as the "Distanz-fresser"; the sting of the sobriquet being the substitution of the word "fressen" for "essen," for while humans "essen," animals "fressen."

## CHAPTER XVIII

### RUMANIA—SERBIA—BULGARIA

BADEN-BADEN—THE DANUBE—KING CAROL OF RUMANIA—  
KING ALEXANDER OF SERBIA—BULGARIA—PRINCE  
FERDINAND OF COBURG

AN episode which occurred recently at Wembley reminds me of a somewhat similar experience of which I was near being an eye-witness at Baden many years ago. On several occasions during my time in Austria I spent some cheery days in that most charming of German watering-places.

Count and Countess Festetics used to entertain there at the Villa Stefanie, which she had inherited from her mother, the Grand Duchess of Baden, parties amongst whom were many of the most prominent in social and political circles.

Further, my good friend Prince Carl Egon Fürstenberg, who had a vast property at Donau-eschingen, in the Black Forest, used to take the whole of the Hotel Stefanie and entertain a party there for the Baden race week. On one such occasion I was invited there to meet the Prince of Wales (King Edward), and the party spent a most enjoyable week, racing by day with dances and dinners galore in the evenings.

One evening after dinner the Prince, accompanied by Prince Fürstenberg, Count Redern,

Christopher Sykes, Harry Tyrwhitt, and myself, strolled across to the Kursaal, where we scattered about looking in at the shops and stalls around the arcade.

Shortly after we arrived Harry Tyrwhitt, Equerry in Waiting, came to me rather perturbed, and asked if I had seen the Prince, whom he had missed. While we were talking, H.R.H. appeared smiling and hugely delighted at an incident which had just occurred. It appeared that while standing looking at the contents of a jeweller's stall he had been accosted by an enthusiastic American, who strode up to him and before he was aware of what was going to happen had seized his hand and rung it heartily, exclaiming, "How d'ye do, Prince, how d'ye do? Very glad to make your acquaintance. I always had a great regard for your mama."

I cannot remember ever seeing the Prince more amused and pleased than he was when recounting this incident, and, despite the extremely irregular manner and method of the greeting, its very genuine homeliness seemed to have appealed to him.

I have often wondered if any of those present recalled the story, for I never heard it repeated.

I always regarded Carl Egon Fürstenberg as quite the most attractive among the many Germans I have met. His personal charm appealed to me most strongly; he was to me indeed the Grand Seigneur personified. I was very much touched, after his lamented early death, to learn



from the Princess of the affectionate terms in which he had alluded to me in what were nearly his last moments.

Others of his nationality whose memory appeals to me were General von Plessen, who hardly ever left the Kaiser, and whom I seldom met, but whose gentle manner, and kindly advice to me on one occasion, attracted me much ; for Prince Lichnowski, my old friend and colleague in several posts in Europe, and Ambassador in London when war broke out, I had a great esteem and regard ; and my military colleague in Vienna, General von Deines, was a most sympathetic personality.

Long before the War estranged the two nations I had mentally singled out these German gentlemen as exceptionally harmonising with our ideals.

#### VOYAGES DOWN THE DANUBE

Important dredging operations, a work lasting for some years, were, during my time, in progress at a point known as "the Iron Gates," on the Lower Danube. I made it my practice to visit the scene of this work once annually, and took advantage of occasions when my duties called me to Serbia and Rumania. For this purpose I utilised the excellent steamship service between Budapest and the mouth of the Danube, boarding their steamers at Belgrade and going down stream as far as Giurgevo, where I took train for Bucharest. In this way I made many an interesting and pleasant journey by water, picking up on the way much information from

the captains of these boats, who were always most friendly and communicative.

One of them had been in the service of the Company (*Donau-dampschiffs-gesellschaft*) at the time of the Russo-Turkish War in 1878, and as we passed the various places where in those days the Russians crossed the Danube, his experiences as he recounted them were of great interest. He had had ocular evidence of the disastrous results of the Russian defeats by Osman Pasha during his gallant defence of the Plevna position. He had, he said, witnessed hundreds of Russian troops flying in disorder northward back to the Danube, having cast away rifles, ammunition, and everything which impeded their flight, their only object being somehow to put the river between them and their enemy.

He told me how the conditions went from bad to worse, until at length, he said, the Czar telegraphed to the King of Rumania imploring him "in the name of Christianity" to come to his help. He told me how the Rumanians quickly responded to the call, and put into the field all their available forces.

According to his story, the Rumanian divisions, like Uriah the Hittite, were at once placed in the forefront of the battle, and succeeded in carrying the positions against which the Russians had for so long hurled their masses in vain. He concluded by caustic criticism of the gratitude shown for this service, as evinced at the conclusion of the war, when, as a result of the treaties of San Stefano, or Berlin, the Russians took from Rumania its best province of Bessarabia, and



*Carol*

*1895*

*Mandy, Bucharest.*

KING CAROL OF RUMANIA.



ceded in exchange that marshy swamp at the mouth of the Danube known as the Dobrudscha.

This point was recalled to my notice about that time when one day at manœuvres in Rumania I found myself near King Carol, where from an eminence His Majesty was watching the attack on a position. There were only a few officers near by; the King called me up to him and for some time honoured me by conversing alone with me on subjects of general interest concerning Rumania, both external and internal. I recall to this day many points of that conversation, but the one I could never forget was the bitterness with which the King alluded to the treatment accorded to his country by Russia on the occasion above mentioned; and his remarks, as to the effect this might have on the future, were frequently in my mind when, during the Great War, the policy to be adopted by Rumania was trembling in the balance, and her hesitation in this respect was the subject of criticism.

On the occasions of my periodical visits to Bucharest I was always received most graciously by the King and Queen, and I was specially proud to have opportunities of meeting Queen Elisabeth ("Carmen Sylva"), who was certainly one of the most cultivated and gifted ladies I have ever met. Her Majesty talked English faultlessly, and told me she was devoted to English literature.

Prince Ferdinand (the late King of Rumania) was married during the time I was Military Attaché in Bucharest, and I well remember the



impression made on the Rumanian people by the beauty and charm of their future King's bride. I have to-day a vivid recollection of a bright frosty morning in Bucharest, when, while skating with the Princess Marie, H.R.H. spoke to me of impressions and hopes formed in the country where she had recently arrived, and which was to be her home for the future.

It was with the deepest regret I was prevented having the honour of once more paying homage to their Majesties, when they recently visited London. On the evening of the day on which I had been stricken with illness I was just able to keep an appointment with M. Titulesco (the Rumanian Minister), and discuss with him arrangements for their Majesties' reception, which was to take place the following week at the Legation, and the next morning I collapsed.

I am tempted to return once more to my trips on the Danube and record a pretty incident, of which I was witness during one of them.

One night when passing the neighbourhood of Widin, I was aroused from sleep by the noise of a large influx of passengers at some port at which we were stopping. In the morning when I came on deck I found the bows of the vessel crowded and overflowing with Bulgarian peasants. The captain invited me on to the bridge and explained that they were labourers going down for work at the harvest just commencing on both banks towards the mouth of the river. As the afternoon advanced, while I was still on the bridge, one man singled himself out of the crowd, where there was barely standing-room, and

climbed up on to the roof of a deck cabin, level with the bridge on which I was standing. At first jeering cries from the deck below greeted his action, and I was wondering what it meant. But a sort of reverential silence overcame the crowd as the one solitary Mohammedan from among them fell on his knees, and bending down while his forehead touched the floor on which he knelt, he recited his prayer as calmly as if he had been alone in a deserted Mosque.

The captain, turning to me, remarked, " Surely that is the only religion which is unashamed ! "

#### KING ALEXANDER OF SERBIA

In recounting a visit to the Balkan States in 1886, I mentioned the Crown Prince of Serbia coming into the room at the Palace in Belgrade, while Eddie Wortley and I were having an audience of King Milan.

Within three years of that, my first visit to Belgrade, King Milan abdicated, and his son being then a boy of thirteen, the government of the country had been carried on under a Regency, until in 1893 King Alexander proclaimed himself of age, and took the power into his own hands.

Consequently, although Milan returned later to Belgrade as Generalissimo of the Army, during which time I had opportunities of meeting him again, he was not the reigning sovereign during the five years I was Military Attaché in Serbia ; while his son only took over the reins of government shortly before the conclusion of my official appointment there.

It was, therefore, only on my next visit to Belgrade after he had ascended the throne that I had my first audience of him as King Alexander. That audience haunted my memory for many years afterwards.

From the moment the young King entered the room into which I had been shown, I discovered in him a nervousness which at first I failed to understand. Suddenly, silently, even furtively, H.M. appeared from between the folds of heavily draped curtains, covering the breadth of the room, and at first he seemed almost too nervous to speak. After some moments of awkward silence I ventured to address him in French, the language I used when speaking with King Milan.

On this for one moment a smile lit up his sad face, and to my surprise he remarked, "I had hoped that you would have remembered that I spoke English." And indeed I found that, in spite of what his father had told me years before, he had, by that time at any rate, made good progress with our language.

The King remained during the whole interview in close proximity to the curtain, with his back turned to it, while at intervals glancing behind him. It eventually dawned on me that terror of assault was the dominant state of mind of this poor young monarch, not yet out of his teens; and I had no doubt that behind that curtain was concealed some source of assistance, in case it should be needed.

The impression with which I eventually retired from that audience was a very sad one, and it



*Alexandre*

*Adèle, Vienna.*

KING ALEXANDER OF SERBIA.





was only within a few years that the news of the unspeakable horror which occurred in those very rooms brought home to me how supremely the apprehensions I had discerned were justified.

Although not officially appointed to Bulgaria, when visiting Belgrade and Bucharest I took advantage of returning to Sofia on several occasions, at the invitation of Sir Nicholas O'Connor, our Minister there, for the country and the people had much interested me when I first went there in 1886.

I was at Sofia again within a few years after the arrival of Prince Ferdinand of Coburg (later King of Bulgaria) in 1887, and I had the honour of being received on several occasions by H.R.H., who conversed freely with me on the prospects of his country, and the measures he hoped to introduce for its improvement and prosperity. Prince Ferdinand impressed me very considerably by the grasp he had already got of existing conditions, and it seemed to me that Bulgaria was indeed lucky in her choice of a ruler, in whose capable hands they might find some consolation for the loss of their beloved Prince Alexander.

## CHAPTER XIX

PARIS—BRUSSELS—BERNE, 1895-1901

NEW ASPECTS—THE INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT—THE DREYFUS CASE—MARQUIS DE GALLIFET—THE JOCKEY CLUB—THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR

I RETURNED from Vienna in the spring of 1895, and had just settled down in London as second-in-command of my battalion, when the Duke of Cambridge sent for me to come and see him at the War Office.

H.R.H. told me that in July of that year the appointment of Military Attaché in Paris would be vacant. After saying that there were already a great number of applicants for the post, and repeating the various arguments advanced in favour of their respective claims, he stated that, in his opinion, I was specially qualified for the appointment, and concluded by asking me, "Will you take it?" I hesitated for a moment, thinking of the prospect of so sudden a change of plans, and specially with regard to two points. When H.R.H. asked me what I was thinking of, I told him my first care was the expense entailed; for my five years in Austria had already made heavy inroads on my slender capital. Further, I said, I had while in Austria been promoted to Lieut.-Colonel, and four years later on returning home had reverted to the rank

of Major. "What," I asked H.R.H., "will the Austrian Military Attaché here, Prince Louis Esterhazy, report to Vienna with reference to my reduced rank?" and I asked if I went to Paris would it be as Lieut.-Colonel with certainty of retention of that rank on return home?

The Duke kindly assured me on the latter point, and I accepted. On leaving the room I found General Sir Reginald Gipps, Military Secretary, awaiting me to learn my decision. I told him I had accepted and explained on what condition. The sequel as to how this matter was treated is referred to elsewhere. To my appointment in Paris was to be added that of Military Attaché in Brussels and Berne.

Immediately I got to Paris I was lucky to find a *rez-de-chaussée* apartment in the Avenue du Bois, with access from my study to a charming little garden. It was an ideal *gîte* and just suited me, for every morning I used to ride at an early hour in the Bois, followed by my two collies.

I arrived in Paris just in time to attend the review at Longchamps, always held on the occasion of the fête of the "Quatorze Juillet," and had thus a first-class opportunity of seeing French troops at a parade review on a big scale. My Austrian and other experiences at once came in useful for purposes of comparison, and I was deeply interested in all I saw. I was most warmly received on all sides by the French officers. At the review I was presented to General de Boisdeffre, Chief of the General Staff, and from that moment onwards I found in him a most kindly and sympathetic support, which

soon put me on most friendly terms with all branches of the War Office and General Staff. I can never sufficiently express my gratitude for the courtesy shown me by the officers of the French Army during my time in Paris.

Before long I concluded with General de Boisdeffre a similar arrangement to that which I had instituted in Vienna with General von Beck, whereby on occasions of manœuvres I should furnish him with the names of British officers nominated by the War Office to attend them, giving an assurance at the time that the list was a complete and final one. I have already described how in this connection I was "let in" by the ardour of the British officer, when the General, more in sorrow than in anger, accused me of breaking faith with him.

In the early days of the "75 gun," of which the French were justly proud and proportionately secretive, its fame attracted the attention of every War Office in Europe, for it was reported to be immune from the necessity of relaying between rounds, and thereby to attain a celerity of fire hitherto unknown. Thus the French manœuvres about this time were specially popular with foreign officers.

On one occasion before I made a closer acquaintance with this gun, the manœuvres concluded by an attack in force on a strong position held by a skeleton force. The G.O.C. the artillery of the defending army, with whom I conversed before the attack began, kindly offered to ride with me along the position, and a remark he made when we had traversed the

whole distance gave me important indications. The position had somewhat similar conditions to that of the fateful day of Gravelotte, gentle slope with splendid visibility to the front ; and on my remarking that I had noticed the whole of his artillery was massed in two formations, one on either of the extreme flanks, leaving the centre of his line apparently exposed, the General replied that the centre was for the enemy the most dangerous zone, "for," he added, "with this gun nothing on earth can live under the cross-fire I can direct upon it."

While in Austria I had learnt the great importance of studying carefully, and reporting in minute detail, the annual war budget, for I felt that from this one could gather a fairly clear conception of the trend generally as regards the military situation and policy.

On arrival in Paris I found this task especially interesting and instructive, and much facilitated by reason of the lucid explanatory statement by the Minister of War with which the publication of his budget was invariably accompanied.

During my whole time in Paris the relations between England and France were periodically disturbed, and at times rendered even perilous. The Dreyfus case, the Fashoda incident, the South African War, all tended to embitter the feeling in France towards ourselves, and yet I am proud to record that all through those critical years the attitude to me was one of unflinching kindness and courtesy. One shadow alone clouded the atmosphere, and that was, I am glad to say, only temporarily.



General Sir Henry Brackenbury I have already spoken of. The importance of the work of an Intelligence Division in peace time is apt to be overlooked, and possibly underrated by the man in the street.

It was only when I began to combine with foreign travel a habit of picking up information that I myself realised how absolutely necessary it was that, for the purpose of maintaining our own army *à la hauteur* of its duties and requirements, we must be kept closely in touch with what other Powers were doing. For surely, to quote a well-known adage, the guiding principle to go by is that the ultimate object of organising and training an army is to prepare it for fighting a battle, if and when called upon to do so.

To this day I retain lively recollections of my good relations with the hard-working staff whose Head Quarters were in Queen Anne's Gate, working under Brackenbury, later under General Chapman, and finally Sir John Ardagh.

Names which remain in my memory, like Everett, Grierson, Callwell, Lee, Fairholme, Waters, are prominent in this connection; and when in 1914 we were suddenly put to the test, unprepared as were many of those directing our destinies, the driving power which enabled Sir John French to bring that small but incomparable force into the gap in Belgium, and thus to stem the first rush (which point had often been urged as of vital importance), came in a large measure from the spadework of years done in Queen Anne's Gate, supported by reports from officers in the Chanceries of our European embassies.

Jimmy Grierson, as he was in those days when I used to invade his room, and find a cheery welcome while he smoked the pipe that was never out of his mouth, became, as is well known, General Sir James Grierson, and when the Great War broke out was travelling in France to take up the high command to which he had been appointed, when, alas! he died suddenly on the journey to the front, and thus at the outset of the struggle we lost one of our biggest assets.

Some time after I went to Vienna he was appointed to Berlin as Military Attaché, in succession to Colonel Leopold Swaine. I had often chaffed him about his predilection for Germany, which after all was only natural for family reasons. He and I, as may be expected, kept up a constant correspondence between Berlin and Vienna. I was amused to find how, as time went on, he changed his opinion about the Germans: in fact by the time he left Berlin no one mistrusted them more cordially than he did, which is important, for he knew more about the German Army and their military policy than any British officer of his day.

After he left Berlin he rose swiftly in the profession, and while I remained on the Continent we frequently exchanged views as to the coming struggle, which we were both absolutely convinced must ensue before long. I often wonder, if he had been spared to us, what effect his knowledge and influence would have had as regards the conduct of the war, for after quitting Berlin he had given most of his time to the subject.

Callwell, an old friend when a Captain in the Intelligence Department, now General Sir Charles Callwell and author of works on military subjects, held during the Great War the important post of Director of Military Operations until the end of 1915. His room in the War Office was close to mine, and I occasionally ran in to see him. Thus we renewed a friendship in 1914 which had left many pleasant memories in the early nineties.

#### THE DREYFUS CASE

I had not been long in my new post when I was unwittingly and most unwillingly drawn into the vortex of the Dreyfus case, which by then was already beginning to stir up feeling in France, such as no one elsewhere could possibly estimate.

When I took up my duties in Paris my predecessor, General the Hon. Reginald Talbot, described to me the case as it appeared to him, and the recent degradation and banishment to the *Ile du Diable* of Captain Dreyfus. I gathered that General Talbot firmly believed in Dreyfus's guilt, and it was not surprising that I did so too.

I think it was in the month of May 1896, about nine months after my arrival in Paris, that the Italian Military Attaché, Colonel Pannizardi, called on me to tell me that Colonel Schwarzkoppen, the German Military Attaché, who was his great friend and constant companion, had asked him to seek my advice on the following point.

A member of the French Senate, M. Scheurer-Kestner, was, it appeared, about to reopen the

Dreyfus case. Now, at the time of the trial the German Embassy had disavowed any connection with the *bordereau*, the document on which Dreyfus had been convicted. Schwarzkoppen now wished Pannizardi to tell me that the *bordereau* was not written by Dreyfus, but by another officer; he would not give his name, but it was, he said, one well known in Hungary. This of course inferred that at the time the Embassy disowned the *bordereau* my colleague at least knew all about it, and might even have been the recipient of it.

I was so horrified that I remember that moment as if it were to-day. In my little garden in the Avenue du Bois, where the conversation took place, a lovely morning in May, the whole surroundings seemed to swim before my eyes. I gasped out, "Do you mean to tell me that that poor man, eating his heart out and grilling on that island, is innocent, and our colleague knew it? If so, you can tell him I never wish to speak to him again." Pannizardi replied that Schwarzkoppen at the time had understood that it was not on the *bordereau*, but on some other document that Dreyfus had been convicted. I said that this altered the circumstances to some extent, and possibly mitigated them, and that my advice to Schwarzkoppen was to explain the matter to Berlin through his Embassy, and get himself recalled before the storm burst.

A very short interval elapsed before there came a telegram (*en clair*, so that anyone could read it) to Schwarzkoppen from the Kaiser: "In view of the services you have rendered, I nominate

you to be Colonel Commanding my First Regiment of Potsdam Guards. You are to return to Berlin at once." (I quote this telegram purely from memory.)

And thus Schwarzkoppen left Paris before the debate in the Senate started the storm which for some years raged throughout France, and indeed throughout Europe. Meanwhile mine was a very difficult position. The French of all classes and professions were kinder to me than I can say, and I can never sufficiently express my gratitude for all the consideration and hospitality I met with during my six years in Paris. I used to stay in their châteaux, shoot their pheasants, hunt with their hounds, dine out in their houses, race on Sundays, and was a privileged member of their best clubs. Thus at times I could not help hearing conversations and views expressed which, with the information I had received, made my position an extremely delicate one. Sometimes suddenly the talk would cease, while an awkward pause or a glance seemed to show me that, whatever they might feel for me personally, I was, after all, a foreign Military Attaché, and as such a potential spy. I yearned to be of use to my French friends, but realised the impossibility under the circumstances, and all those years I held my tongue.

Once and only once I was most reluctantly drawn into taking part in a conversation on the subject. But as proof of the good feeling I invariably experienced during my time in Paris I am glad to record that, though on that occasion a difference of opinion was inevitable, the incident



terminated without disturbing in any way the very cordial relations which existed between my French friends and myself.

I reported home at the time, as was my duty, that a duel would be the outcome of the incident; with the natural result that by those who were ignorant of the facts I should be blamed on the grounds of indiscretion. Even after the lapse of thirty years I have thought it best to omit a detailed account of this episode.

One more recollection in connection with the Dreyfus case, and I am glad to conclude my personal experience of it. Soldiers of our day justly venerate the name of General the Marquis de Gallifet, that most gallant and dashing French cavalry officer, whose record in the war of 1870 was celebrated for valour throughout France. In spite of the disabilities caused by an almost mortal wound which he had received at that time, this gallant soldier was a most prominent figure in the Paris world of my days. He ever showed me the greatest friendliness, and his cheery, downright manner attracted me immensely.

When the Dreyfus case was at its worst he was suddenly appointed Minister of War. As he was well known for his Royalist sympathies, his appointment was received with astonishment in French social circles. When I called at the War Office to pay my respects to him, he received me most warmly, and I remained with him alone for nearly an hour while we consumed two of his biggest cigars. He told me that his friends had criticised his taking an appointment under the Government, but that he had done so

with only one object. When offered it, after due reflection, he had decided to accept, and was determined to keep and hold it until he could see his country steered clear of the trouble which had arisen over the Dreyfus case.

He spoke most openly on the subject, and I could well understand how the *affaire* had grieved and pained this fine old soldier, for his one thought was to be of service to France and her army, so dear to the hearts of all Frenchmen.

General de Gallifet was the promoter and staunch supporter of the Cavalry School at Saumur, which I always regard as the finest training-school for a cavalry officer in the world. I could tell the French cavalry seat anywhere, with the stirrup leathers well let down and the hands on the withers, and when I used to meet the French officers riding in the Bois and admire their seat on a horse I wished I could see it more often elsewhere.

I was so interested with all he told me of Saumur that the moments slipped away, and when I got up to take my leave I apologised for occupying so much of the War Minister's time, but his parting words as he accompanied me to the door reassured me, and I left more than ever under the charm of this distinguished representative of the French Cavalry.

#### THE JOCKEY CLUB AND THE RUE ROYALE

My experiences of club life in Paris were very pleasant ones. Within a short time of my arrival I was elected a member of the Jockey Club, and also of the Rue Royale, or Petit Cercle.

The Jockey Club, unlike ours of the same name, was a social club in the Rue Scribe, with many members besides those interested in racing, including, as it did, a large contingent of army officers. There was, however, a select clique of sportsmen who frequented a room at the extreme end of the long suite forming the club, which was called the "sport-room," and when members of this clique dined at the club they occupied what was called the "sport-table." I was very proud when I was invited into the sport-room, and it was the room I chiefly frequented when at the club. I was also invited to sit at the sport-table, and the same compliment was accorded "Mungo" Herbert (the Hon. Michael Herbert, Counsellor of Embassy, afterwards our Ambassador at Washington).

In the sport-room were to be met an old-fashioned class of sportsmen, even then becoming extinct in England, some of whom reminded me of the Lord Falmouth of those days. I do not think many of these gentlemen worried much about betting, but I hardly ever went into the room without finding the conversation to be on the subject of racing, the breeding and the form of the racehorse.

I was glad to be able in a small way to return the many kindnesses shown me in the sport-room, by suggesting the names of some of the most prominent racing gentlemen in France to our Jockey Club, and my idea was so readily met in England that at that time several of them were invited to become members of our Jockey Club. This, I venture to think, con-

tributed in no small degree to the retention of friendly relations, certainly in sporting circles, between the two countries, even despite the strained feeling which extended over my whole time in Paris.

Among those who during that time became members of our Jockey Club were Prince Auguste d'Arenberg (President of the French Jockey Club and of the Suez Canal Commission), M. Henri Delamarre, the Vicomte d'Harcourt, and the Duc de la Force, while my dear old friend M. du Bos, the leading authority at Auteuil, was shortly afterwards elected.

One day, when the Prince of Wales (King Edward) came to stay for a week in Paris, H.R.H. told me he was already engaged for dinner every night but two, and said I was to suggest some plan for these nights.

I proposed dining at the Café Anglais for one night, as I knew the Prince had not been there for some time, where I considered that, though possibly dull as regards company, the best cuisine of any Paris restaurant could still be found. During dinner there H.R.H. told me I was perfectly right as to the cuisine. For the second evening I suggested dining at the sport-table of the Jockey Club, which the Prince seldom visited, repairing afterwards to the sport-room, and a box at the Folies Bergères to wind up with. The Prince approved my proposals, and I was charged with the arrangements.

That night at the Jockey Club I shall never forget : it was a huge success from every point of view. As we drove up to the Club the *porte*

*cochère* in the Rue Scribe was as usual closed, and we were expected to alight on the pavement. The Prince, who was in high good-humour and evidently looking forward to the evening, told me to get the gates opened and that we would drive in. He added jokingly that the Jockey Club would be the better for a waking up that night. Of course we drove in, and the Prince was received by the President, Prince d'Arenberg, and conducted to the sport-room, where a large number of the leading members were assembled and presented to him before dinner.

When we went into the dining-room I found the sport-table had been stretched to three times its usual length. We took our places and I can truly say that never have I seen an entertainment which went better. As always when present, no matter where, the Prince at once set everyone at his ease, and from the very start the conversation (which, as in France, was general all round the table) revolved round him who was the guest of the evening, and whose genial manner and ready repartee made him the centre on which the whole table was focussed.

Dinner over, the rest of the evening was passed in the sport-room, for when at a late hour I reminded the Prince of the Folies Bergères, I was told that we were far too well occupied where we were to go anywhere else. Afterwards many who had been present there told me that the evening was the most cheery and genial one which the Jockey Club had seen for years, and that it would be ever remembered in the annals of the Club.



It is unnecessary for me to dwell here on the importance of such a gathering from an international point of view.

During the Boer War Mungo Herbert and I felt chary of showing ourselves in the Club, and we decided we would refrain from going there until our victory was assured: for had we done so it was possible we might have been exposed to trouble, the hostile feeling towards England at that time was so strong.

One day, just about the time our fortunes in South Africa were at their lowest ebb, Admiral Duperry, one of the most popular members of society, whom I used to call the French Charlie Beresford, was announced in my rooms at the Avenue du Bois. On entering he said: "I have called to tell you, on behalf of your good friends of the sport-room, that they remark with regret that you and Herbert have given up frequenting the Club. I am here to tell you from them that, although we naturally did not appreciate the way England behaved to us over the Fashoda incident, we have no personal feeling at all against you and Herbert, indeed very much the reverse, and I am to tell you that, if you will come to the Club, we shall welcome you both most warmly."

On this I told the Admiral that I was more touched than I could say at the most kind message he brought me, "but," I added, "you will, I am sure, understand our attitude if you put yourselves for one moment in our shoes. Imagine," I said, "France at war with some small Power, which it was considered she should have

little difficulty in defeating ; and reverses, such as we are for the moment experiencing, surprising the whole of Europe. Take also into consideration the hostile attitude of nearly the whole of the Continental Press, and the jubilations here in Paris over our discomfiture, where every reverse is magnified and chuckled over. As we are certain to win in the end, and determined never to drop it till we *have* won, is it not wiser and more dignified to avoid the clubs, than for Herbert and me to be at this moment *en évidence* everywhere when, after all, it is really unnecessary ? ” I added, “ If you were Naval Attaché in London, and France in a similar position to ours, would you frequent the Turf Club until France became the top dog ? ”

The Admiral shook me warmly by the hand, and left saying, “ I shall take back to your friends your reasons, which they will all appreciate as coming from a gentleman ; none the less we shall look forward to welcoming you both at the Jockey Club whenever you see fit to come.”

## CHAPTER XX

### PARIS

PERSIMMON'S DERBY, 1896—THE ASCOT CUP, 1898—HUNTING  
IN FRANCE

JUST before the week of the Derby in 1896 we were discussing the race in the sport-room of the Jockey Club. I had arranged to go over on the Saturday before the race and was asked to telegraph if I thought the Prince of Wales's horse had a fair chance of winning, in which case many of the leading sportsmen said they would come over.

On Sunday I wired that Leo Rothschild's horse St. Frusquin was favourite, but that I believed the Prince's horse would win. By Tuesday morning a very strong representation of French racing men was present in the stand at Epsom.

The next day, when Persimmon beat St. Frusquin by a short head after a terrific ding-dong struggle, as anyone who was present can testify, the scene of wild excitement which ensued baffles all description. The whole area in sight, the stands, the course, and the hill, was a seething mass of cheering people, while in every direction the air was full of hats tossed up. I was standing near by as the Prince passed down on to the course to lead his horse in. Never in my life have I seen such a sight, nor can I describe the

expressions of loyalty and goodwill which I witnessed as His Royal Highness threaded his way through the excited crowd leading Persimmon towards the weighing-room.

In the midst of it all one of my French friends, the Marquis de Tracy, came up to me and, speaking with great emotion, said to me, "I have never seen such a sight in my life. I would be proud to belong to a nation where such a feeling exists."

And for long afterwards the members frequenting the sport-room used to discuss enthusiastically the wonderful impression they had derived from being present at Persimmon's Derby.

#### THE ASCOT CUP, 1898

I was present when my good friend M. de Bremond won the Ascot Cup with Elf II in 1898, and next day at Ascot I received a telegram from the Jockey Club in Paris asking me to attend a dinner which it was intended to give there on the following Saturday in celebration of the French victory. I replied regretting that I was unable to accept the invitation, being on leave in England for another week ; but they answered urging me to come, as Bremond was going to speak and express his thanks for the way in which his victory had been received by the British public.

On that I decided to go, and left for Paris early on Saturday morning. It was evident that I was in for a speech, and, as it would be in French, I suddenly bethought me while on the journey of

what I had been told by two of our leading statesmen of the way in which they wrote out their speeches beforehand and learnt them by heart. The idea had never appealed to me before, but under the circumstances I decided to give it a trial. While on the journey between Calais and Paris I composed and learnt by heart what I flattered myself was the finest speech I should ever make. On arrival in Paris I had not even time to go home ; I drove straight to the Jockey Club, dressed there, and enjoyed my dinner in the calm reflection that at any rate my flow of oratory was assured. I even went so far as to swagger, when Bremond remarked to me that he hoped we should get over our speeches early, by replying that I didn't care a d——, for I knew mine by heart.

Alas ! I had a rude awakening, for when I got on to my legs the whole of my carefully prepared oration went out of my head ; I saw at once that efforts to recall would be worse than useless, and I just spoke as the ideas came, which I could only hope pulled me through with reasonable success. At any rate, my words were received with every sign of friendly appreciation. But I there and then made a vow never to try again to learn a speech by heart, and I was more than ever convinced that the years of cramming in connection with the Staff College course had ruined my memory for detail.

#### A FRENCH HORSE IN THE DERBY, 1899

Bremond brought over his grey horse *Holocauste* to run in the Derby of 1899. The



previous Sunday Holocauste had run at Chantilly, and during the race, when they had covered about two-thirds of the distance, I saw him well placed and going very comfortably. Suddenly as the field reached a slight dip in the course, close by the château and before turning to come into the straight, Holocauste appeared momentarily to stand still, and thereby lost his place. He struggled on gallantly, however, regained his position, and though my memory fails me as to how he was placed at the finish, he gave me the impression that, had it not been for the "dwell" I had remarked, he would have won.

On the Derby day Harry Chaplin, whom I met in the paddock, questioned me about the French horse. He was not enamoured of his looks, said he did not look class enough for the race, too big, and ungainly in action.

At the start, to my great surprise, Holocauste, unlike his usual tactics, jumped off in front and practically led the field to Tattenham Corner. Tod Sloan was riding him. It was the horse's first experience of the American jockey, and the new style of "seat" he introduced, which I remember thinking at the time was the cause of the altered tactics in running. Just as they turned the corner and started to come down the hill, Marcus Beresford, who was near me, ran up saying, "Can this French horse stay?" I replied, "That's his strong point; I've never seen him make the running before." Marcus said, "Then he's won the Derby." I replied, "Looks very like it." The words weren't out of my

mouth before Holocauste fell headlong, a ghastly sight to see.

A crowd of Frenchmen, headed by Bremond, rushed out of the stand, some jumping the railings, any way so as to get quickest to the scene of the accident. The crowd surged on up the course behind the race, as the horses neared the winning-post. Bremond told me he had the greatest difficulty in reaching his poor horse. By the time he got there, he said, the horse had already been stripped naked by the crowd. Not a sign of a saddle or bridle! Holocauste had broken his fetlock and had to be shot on the spot.

On reflection, the incident I had remarked during the race on the previous Sunday occurred to me, and I had little doubt the damage was set up then. But it made me ashamed to hear Bremond's loudly expressed disgust at the state of our racecourses during a meeting, covered, as he said, with paper, orange peel, and banana skins. He could not understand the public being allowed on the course between races, which, I must confess, after experience of racing on the Continent, always puzzled me.

#### HUNTING IN FRANCE

In France I had many invitations to hunt with the various packs of staghounds in the neighbourhood of Paris, and the experience gained during a run through these vast forests was most instructive. Though sometimes, to one accustomed to hunting in England, the stretches of woodland seemed interminable, there was much

to be learnt there in the "art of venerie," as to which the French sportsmen chaffingly chided us with not paying sufficient attention, being mainly occupied, as they said, with galloping and jumping, a criticism which rather impressed me.

For it reminded me of a remark once made to me by Tom Firr, when he was huntsman to the Quorn. We were galloping across country, much to the amusement of the huge "field" which was out. I asked him what we were hunting. He smiled and replied that "casting forward" at a sharp canter was often as good as a run to the many who failed to realise the difference.

In France the advantage gained by a knowledge of the notes on the horn, and the marvellous way hounds stuck to their stag, through the herds of deer met with in course of a run, were revelations to me.

Once near Chantilly, when I was mounted by the courtesy of the General commanding the Cavalry, who had invited me to come down for a day's hunting, we ran into our stag. I was just galloping off to catch my train, without waiting for the obsequies which I hated and always avoided, when an officer pursued me, calling out, "Où allez-vous, mon Colonel? Mais nous allons vous faire les honneurs." I turned back to be blooded and go through the whole of the quaint ceremony followed on such occasions. I have now the trophy hanging in my study, with an inscription on it, and am proud of it, for it recalls many pleasant memories of hunting in France.

## CHAPTER XXI

### PARIS

#### THE BAZAR DE LA CHARITÉ

ONE of the most ghastly tragedies of modern days, of which I was a horrified spectator, and, by sheer stupidity, for a long time completely ignorant of what I was witnessing, took place in Paris in the month of May 1897. The evening before, I had dined with my friends the Marquis and Marquise de Jaucourt, and the conversation had turned on the big Bazar de Charité which was to take place next day, and at which my hostess and her daughter were to hold a stall. I had no idea where the bazaar was to be held, and the subject went completely out of my head.

The next day I lunched with Maurice Ephrussi in the Avenue du Bois, opposite to where I lived. After luncheon I joined my brother Vesey at my rooms, where he was staying, and we started to walk down to the Embassy. As we descended the Champs Elysées, just after passing the Arc de Triomphe, I saw at some distance on our right a great cloud of smoke ascending, followed at intervals by sheets of flame. I said to my brother, "There's a big fire somewhere; it seems to be on the other side of the Seine. Let's go and see." We ran down the Avenue Marceau towards the Place de l'Alma.

As we neared the latter we passed lines of

empty motor-cars and carriages drawn up to the kerb, with the chauffeurs, coachmen, and footmen all chatting merrily, and I remarked what a lot of people seemed to have found out about the fire already, for by that time I could see by the smoke ascending that we were nearing the conflagration. What afterwards astonished me was that none of the servants we passed with the waiting carriages had as yet taken alarm.

As we turned the corner of the Place de l'Alma I saw a crowd, as yet only a few people, rushing towards the entrance of the Rue Jean-Goujon, and in that street to my right front was the biggest flame I ever saw in my life. The crowd already blocked the entrance to the street, but I got as near as I could and climbed up a lamp-post in the "Place," stupidly never asking a question as to what the burning building was. As I climbed up I saw one huge flat sheet of flame swaying up and down; the heat thrown off was awful, and sparks were flying in all directions. I called to my brother that it looked like a market-place or a big stable, and that I feared the roof was going to fall in. As I spoke, the sheet of flame collapsed and the crowd, now assuming vast proportions, groaned, the women wailing and crying. Even then I had not an idea of the horror of the tragedy I was witnessing, and although it could have made no difference, for there was nothing to be done that could avail, I always blamed myself that I made no enquiries from the bystanders.

Within a minute or so my friend Count Philippe d'Alsace came running up to where I



was, and shouted to me, "Isn't this awful?" I noticed he was deadly pale, breathless, and had evidently been running hard. I replied that it was the worst fire I had ever seen, and asked him what the place was. He said, "Don't you know? It's the Bazar de Charité, and there are at least three hundred of our friends in it."

Stunned by what he told me, I jumped down off the lamp-post, of course unable to be of the slightest use, for by this time the crowd blocked not only the whole of the "Place" but also all the streets approaching it, to the great detriment of the fire engines and salvage corps now tearing up every minute.

Then began the saddest and most horrifying spectacle, as lines of poor people who had escaped with their lives came past us. We did what we could to help these poor people and to assist in carrying those who still lived, while the ever-increasing procession of those who had lost their lives being borne to the shelter of a neighbouring churchyard filled one with horror at the magnitude of this awful catastrophe.

Suddenly I remembered that some of the ladies from our Embassy were to be at the bazaar, and I tore off there to warn the Chancery. I shall never forget the shock I got as I reached the Champs Elysées, a few hundred yards distant, and in crossing got stuck on a shelter midway. A lovely May afternoon, the route was crowded with carriages and motors going to and returning from the Bois. Just as I reached the shelter in the centre of the avenue, Madame de Waru, late Marquise d'Hervé, was passing in a barouche.

She stopped it, and said, "Colonel Dawson, will you come and lunch with me next Thursday?" I replied, "Alas! you will have no party next Thursday," and I told her of the horror I had just left. I recount this incident as illustrating the ghastly contrast of the two scenes only a few hundred yards apart.

When I got to the Embassy I found my colleagues at work in the Chancery, calmly ignorant of the catastrophe. Of course everyone rushed off to search for news of their womenkind, and I am glad to say that in the Embassy we had no loss to mourn. I think, with one exception—Mrs. Austin Lee, who escaped unharmed—none of our ladies were at the bazaar. And I also ascertained, to my great relief, that the Jaucourt ladies had suffered no hurt. I returned at once to the sad scene, and spent the rest of the afternoon doing anything I could to assist.

A few days later I met d'Alsace at the Club. I was worried at my stupidity in not realising what it was I was looking at. I asked him if he remembered when he found me on the lamp-post, and told him I had then been there nearly a quarter of an hour. When I first arrived, I said, there were but few people between me and the burning building. I said I understood there was a small door in the wall there which unfortunately opened inwards, and thus blocked the escape of the inmates, who were crowded in heaps against the closed door. I had learnt that opposite that door was a stable. I asked him whether he thought that timely organisation for battering in the door, say with ladders or carriage-poles, could

have been effected had the situation been realised.

His answer comforted me so far as it could, for he told me that he and Prince Joachim Murat had entered the street where the fire was, by the opposite end of it, just about the time I had arrived. When they saw the fire they tore down the street towards it. As they neared the end where the fire was, the heat became so intense their hair and clothes, he said, were singed, while even the birds were dropping off the roofs of the houses on the opposite side of the street, burnt to death by the heat of the enormous sheet of flame. By that time, he said, no one could from their end of the street approach the burning building, and he had only reached the point where he found me by making a detour round the back of the opposite houses. He reassured me by saying that by the time I arrived no one could have approached that door and lived.

I afterwards learnt that the quick spread of the enormous flame was accounted for by some cinema arrangement, whereby a system of tarred wires stretched along the roof, and the thought of the burning tar dropping on to the inmates crowded below, in summer hats and dresses, was too horrible to conceive.

I had frequently witnessed death in its most violent form, but the memory of this scene, filled by so many that Paris could give of her best, will haunt me as long as I live.

## CHAPTER XXII

### PARIS

#### THE FASHODA INCIDENT

I DOUBT whether many people in England, perhaps also in France, were aware at the time, or are even now aware, of the gravity of the crisis consequent on the sudden and unexpected appearance of Marchand and his gallant little band on the banks of the Nile in July 1898, just at the most critical moment of Kitchener's advance towards Khartoum. As it fell to me to report daily, throughout the period of tension in both capitals, the information I had as to progress of events, I am enabled here to set down some details which will, I venture to say, prove that rarely, if ever, have relations between the two countries been so strained, and the prospect of war happily averted only at the last moment. When I discovered the serious view of the situation taken in Paris by all responsible authorities, my Ambassador, Sir Edmund Monson, charged me to report in London what I knew. I crossed at once by night to London, and the whole of the next day was taken up with visits to the Foreign Office, War Office, Admiralty, and the Naval and Military Intelligence Departments. Thenceforward for nearly ten nights in succession I crossed the Channel either one way or the other, arriving about 6.30 a.m. at my destination, when each morning I went to bed until 9 a.m., returning,

after a long and busy day, the same night by train at 9 p.m.

During this period I interviewed in London most of the authorities concerned, including Lord Salisbury, Lord Lansdowne, Lord Wolseley, Admiral Sir Cyprian Bridge and General Sir John Ardagh, Directors of Naval and Military Intelligence respectively, General Sir Henry Brackenbury, and many others. I am bound to say that at first I was looked upon as an alarmist, and I found it anything but easy to persuade them in London that the menace was of vital and urgent importance. Once the authorities became convinced, preparations to meet the crisis were put in hand. My information amounted to this : that five French Army Corps were under orders to prepare for the invasion of England, the ports of embarkation, five in number, decided upon, the necessary shipping and embarkation and debarkation facilities at hand, and even the General destined to command the force selected, for he informed me so himself. The latter was my friend General Négrier, famous for his successes in Algiers and Tunis. At the Petit Cercle or Rue Royale Club I used at times to sit next him at dinner, and this kindly, courteous officer did not mince matters when discussing the situation with me. Further, more than one French Admiral, personal friends of mine, warned me that we need not count on a speedy termination to the war (if it came), from a naval point of view, for they had no intention whatever of sallying out to offer us battle at sea : " You will have to blockade the whole length of our



coast-line," they told me, "and after some years of keeping up the blockade you will get a bit tired of it. Besides, as you know, we are even now perfecting the newest thing in ships for purposes of submarine warfare, which will prove to be a nasty counter-blast to blockading tactics." As a matter of fact their first submarine was at that moment lying in the Seine, just below the bridge from the Place de la Concorde, and had for some time been an object of the greatest interest to our Naval Attaché, Captain Douglas Gamble, R.N., and myself.

A further argument adduced was that comparisons of the two navies based on experience of Nelson's days were unfair and misleading, France having at that time lost many of her best naval officers, killed during the Revolution, with the result that just at the critical moment many commands were held by those in no way qualified for the duty.

One day, when the period of tension was at its highest, I was talking to Prince Auguste d'Arenberg at the Jockey Club. He was much distressed at the turn matters were taking, and discussed with me quite openly the subject which was paramount in both our minds. The Prince, besides being President of the International Commission of the Suez Canal, was also the leader of the Colonial Party in France. He questioned me as to why England made such a point of Marchand being withdrawn from the post he had occupied on the Nile, which he said he could not understand. He even confessed that they, the Colonial Party, had purposely instigated, planned,

and started the Marchand expedition, their aim being, he said, to cut straight across our "all-red" route, north to south, with a French route west to east of Africa ; therefore Marchand had orders to continue from the Nile to the east coast, leaving French fortified posts *en route*.

He asked, "What is England's special claim here ?" and added, "I don't believe the English people as a nation have any real interest in the matter." I was careful to emphasise that of course any opinions I might have on the subject were purely personal, having naturally no status to enable me to speak officially ; but that having gone through the brunt of the operations, both in Egypt and the Sudan, when we first went there, I was, I thought, able to reply to the latter point he had made. I reminded him that when in 1882 we took Egypt, we had at the outset of the campaign invited France to come in and co-operate with us, and she had refused. In 1884 and 1885 I had witnessed the terrible hardships endured by the British troops during the advance into, and retirement from, the Sudan, and I knew that during the fighting extending over those years our losses had left many British homes mourning their dead ; and therefore, far from the Marchand incident being regarded apathetically, the Egyptian question was one that had been brought home to many in England ; who were wondering why, when France refused to join us in the early days, she was now trying to interfere with us there.

Prince d'Arenberg confessed that this aspect was a new light to him, which he stated he would

bring to the knowledge of the Colonial Party at once. I asked him, "Why not go and discuss with our Ambassador?" He replied he would gladly do so, but that he had not the pleasure of knowing him. Sir Edmund Monson had comparatively recently taken up his post in succession to Lord Dufferin. On this I invited the Prince to come and see Sir Edmund, and the next day I went with him to the Embassy, where a most friendly conversation took place between him and the Ambassador.

Without prejudice to any small result which may have sprung from that interview, I have always believed that henceforth a more moderate and less exacting tone prevailed in Paris, and this may possibly have assisted somewhat to ease a situation which eventually terminated so happily, when war was averted.

The gist of my argument all through the interviews in London was this: It may be simple enough to commence war with France, if you rely on the Navy, their Navy having at that time admittedly suffered from some years of economical policy; but how and when do you expect to bring it to a conclusion? It is not to be supposed that we contemplate an invasion of France without lengthy and costly preparation.

On one occasion at an interview with a very highly placed official authority, he asked me if I had any suggestions to make; whereon I replied that, so far as I could see, our sea power gave favourable prospects for a successful offensive in a certain direction, which would, at any rate, divert attention and so gain time; but even that

idea paled before the tremendous possibilities which offered themselves on the other side. As a result of this I was told by Lord Wolseley two days later to start at once for the point I had indicated, for purposes of reconnaissance and report. Happily, however, at that moment, unknown to me, the end of the crisis was approaching.

That very evening, having passed the day in London, while dining at the Guards' Club, preparatory to catching the 9 p.m. train back to Paris, I sketched a rough plan of what I had during the day learnt to be our naval position at that moment. Just before I left the Club for Charing Cross Station I sent it to Sir John Ardagh, with an explanatory memo. I had learnt that our Channel Fleet was at Arosa Bay, where I believe some fête in its honour was being given by the Spanish authorities. The only ships available in the Channel, I was told, were two old coast-defence vessels, one at Plymouth and the other somewhere along the coast. Further, I had discovered that the men destined to man the Spithead Forts on mobilisation were mainly at work in the mines in Durham and Cornwall, while these forts were at that moment occupied solely by old women caretakers; and this was what was described to me as the situation on our side, when, just before leaving Paris overnight, I had learnt that the Brest Fleet with steam up was preparing for a raid up the Thames.

I called Sir John's attention to what would be the moral effect in London were war to be declared that night, and action taken simultane-

ously. As may be imagined, my reflections during the journey back to Paris were somewhat on the sombre side.

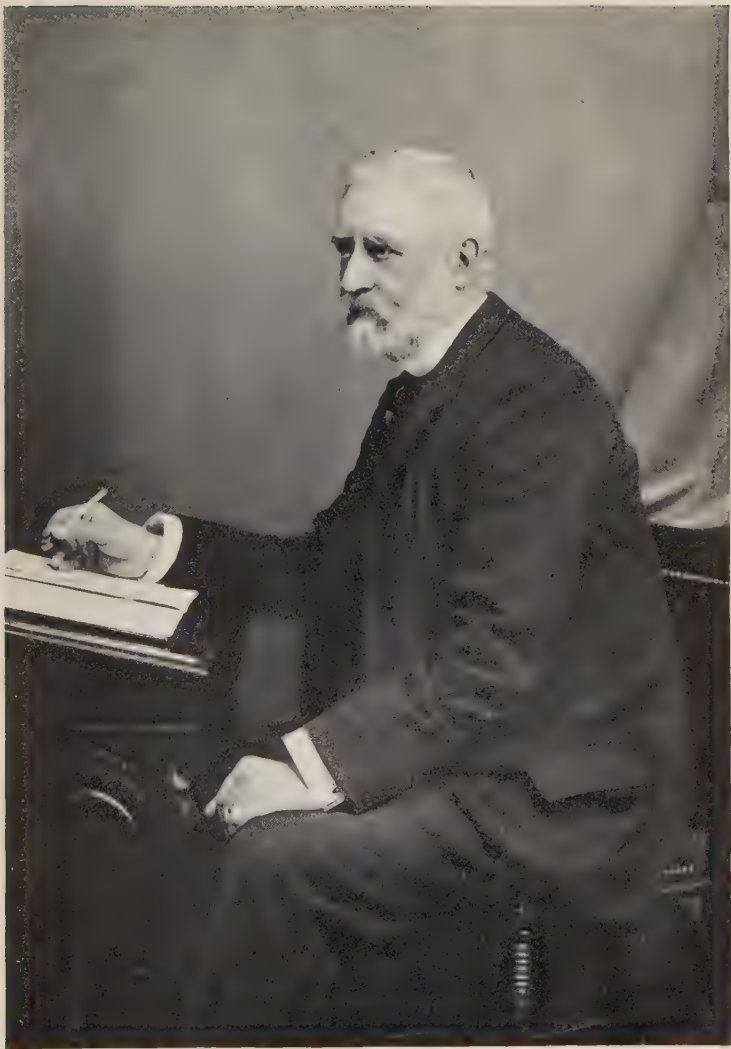
The next morning, on presenting myself at 9.30 in the Ambassador's room, I was astonished to find Sir Edmund in quite a boisterous frame of mind, and his first words to me were, "Congratulate me, my dear Dawson; they've climbed down." I asked when, and on what grounds, also whether he knew any reason for this sudden *volte-face*. He replied that one reason was that the Russians, with whose co-operation they had threatened us if war came, had forsaken them, while a possibly equally persuasive argument lay in the discovery that the arsenals at both Brest and Toulon were empty.

I may mention here that when the next day in London I reported this to General Sir Henry Brackenbury, by that time Surveyor-General of Ordnance in the War Office, he replied, "If they had only known our arsenals are in exactly a similar condition!" Some short time later he told me that he had just asked for an expenditure of twelve millions sterling on munitions of war, threatening to resign if it was not accorded. He got his twelve millions!

So ended the Fashoda incident. But I am glad to take this opportunity to record my very humble opinion that my dear and valued chief, Sir Edmund Monson, was not well treated as regards the kudos which was undoubtedly his due for his skilful handling of the affair throughout the crisis, which, I hold, was in a large degree responsible for our diplomatic victory.



I can bear witness that Sir Edmund's courtesy and tact throughout, combined with a firmness which I once or twice feared might go too far, was for England an asset which might well be termed the winning card played at the Quai d'Orsay during those most important and delicate negotiations ; and yet never when the crisis had passed, when Sir Edmund retired, or even at his death, so far as I could learn at the time, was there any public acknowledgment of the great services he rendered his country at one of the most critical moments of her history. I have often reflected on this, and came to the conclusion that, if my supposition was correct, it was because so little was realised as to how narrowly war was averted that no notice was taken of the scant praise accorded to Sir Edmund Monson in this connection.



Bassano.

Edmund Monson 1895

SIR EDMUND MONSON.



## CHAPTER XXIII

### PARIS

#### THE PRÉFET DE POLICE

DURING my time in Paris the famous M. Lépine held the office of Préfet de Police. Though personally I came but little into contact with him, my experience when I did was such as I think worthy of record.

Shortly after my arrival, to my surprise I was warned by my German and Italian colleagues that I must expect to be "shadowed" while in Paris, and I felt that in view of the general atmosphere of suspicion since the Dreyfus case this was only natural to expect, even in my position as an official at the British Embassy.

Sometimes returning late on foot to my rooms in the Avenue du Bois I used purposely to turn quickly and retrace my steps, and though occasionally I had reason to consider the suspicion justified, I must say I was never molested and was always most courteously treated.

Only on one occasion did I have the opportunity of personally interviewing the Préfet de Police.

It was during the Boer War. The hostility to England on that subject shown by nearly the whole of the Continental Press is well known, and the Paris Press was, to put it mildly, no exception.

I have already touched on the delicate situation thereby created for Mungo Herbert and myself *vis-à-vis* the clubs, how we both decided that

it was wiser to absent ourselves from them for the time being, and I am convinced our attitude was the correct one, both in justice to ourselves and to our French friends.

It is unnecessary, I feel sure, to state that after all the years I had passed moving from capital to capital in Europe, I was bound to have a large circle of correspondents, widely spread and not confined only to Europe, who used to keep me informed of events which they considered might be of interest to me. In this way I received information which convinced me that the Boer War was partially hatched and directed not only in Pretoria, but also by Boer agents working secretly in Brussels and The Hague.

The former capital was one of the posts to which I was at that time officially accredited, and the steps I took to meet the contingency are recorded elsewhere.

As regards Boer agents' activity at The Hague, one name (which I will call X) was brought most prominently to my notice. Needless to say, I in no way ignored the information, with, I trust, successful results.

One day in Paris I received a communication, signed and an address given, which, though not unaccustomed to similar advances, many of which I ignored, I considered worthy of some notice. In it the writer informed me that his brother was the confidential servant of X, at that time in Brussels, that he had access to his master's keys, and that in a certain bureau were most important papers concerning the future conduct of the war, which papers he was in a position to obtain and



send to me for a certain sum of money, if I would signify acquiescence by return of post.

In order to keep my correspondent on the hook without committing myself, I wrote a reply merely acknowledging receipt of his letter. I then took the usual steps which were my custom if I considered a subject worth attention. Apparently my correspondent either could not afford to wait or had purposely set a trap for me. From experience, I had at once inclined to the latter presumption, which was quickly confirmed.

In two days I got another letter from him, saying that his brother had rushed the situation, broken open the bureau and stolen the papers, but had been caught in the act by X, and was under arrest awaiting prosecution.

My correspondent added that ruin stared him and his brother in the face, and that unless I forwarded him within two days the sum of £500 he would report the matter to the newspaper——(naming one of the most prominent of the hostile Press) and have it published in that journal that his brother had acted on my instigation.

No one, of course, could hold the posts I have held without being at one time or another subjected to blackmail, and I was not unaccustomed to being forced into similar false situations, but the urgent need for immediate action of some kind in this matter impressed itself upon me. For, in spite of all the hostility to England as a nation during the many crises which occurred during my time abroad, I shall always be proud to remember that among all those with whom I

came into contact I maintained the most friendly relations, and never experienced other than the most courteous treatment. I was therefore most unwilling for a lying paragraph to be supplied to and appear in the French Press. But what was the best and most politic line to take in such delicate circumstances? What, in short, would be the straightest line, and one best calculated to bring assistance in time?

Then I bethought me of M. le Préfet, and I at once wrote to him and asked if he could receive me that day on a subject of urgent importance. For reply I received an appointment for that afternoon.

When I was ushered into M. Lépine's room I was most cordially received, and he asked me what he could do for me. I could not resist the temptation to tell M. le Préfet that I was of course aware of all the care he had taken of me in past years during my time in Paris, and assuring him of my gratitude. While I was speaking I discerned a flicker of amusement in his kindly eye, and we became at once on the friendly terms I had hoped for. I then told him that there had quite recently arisen a circumstance wherein he really could be of the greatest assistance to me, and that, being convinced of his good intentions, I had ventured to come and appeal to him. Then I related the facts, concealing nothing.

He was most sympathetic, saw at once the necessity for urgent action, promised to do what he could, and we parted on the understanding that when he had anything to communicate I should hear from him again.

Almost immediately after I received a letter from him, in which he informed me that "my friend" had been found to be one of the worst characters in France, an escaped criminal, and a deserter from the *Légion Etrangère*. The letter concluded: "He is now on his way back to Tunis; you will never hear of him again." The promise was religiously kept!

The friendly relations thus established with M. Lépine had a curious and rather amusing sequel.

Many years after I had left Paris I got, through a mutual friend, a message from M. le Préfet. The information it contained interested and amused me considerably. I asked our friend, if ever he got the opportunity, to convey to M. le Préfet a message from me which also might interest him, with the assurance of my gratitude for this and other proofs I had previously received of the kindly feeling he retained for me.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### BRUSSELS

#### KING LEOPOLD II—L'AFFAIRE STOKES

As I have elsewhere stated, to my post in Paris was added that of Military Attaché in Brussels and Berne. After attending manœuvres in both Belgium and Switzerland, I asked to be allowed to devote as much of my time to France as was possible, for I found that my duties there afforded scope for every moment that I had available, and thus, although until the South African War I remained accredited to Brussels, I was rarely able to visit Belgium except on the occasion of Court functions. Manœuvres in connection with fortress warfare were to me the points of special interest in both Switzerland and Belgium.

I had already been fortunate in meeting frequently at Aix-les-Bains King Leopold II, by whose astuteness and sense of humour I had been much impressed. On my appointment to Brussels His Majesty received me most graciously, while throughout my tenure of duty there, whenever I appeared at Court in Brussels, I was honoured by some special mark of notice by the King.

My first official visit to Brussels was in 1895, when, amongst other duties, I attended a State ball; His Majesty had only just returned from

England, during which he had paid a visit to the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire at Chatsworth. I had been invited to join the party there, but stress of work in Paris had prevented me accepting the invitation. Nevertheless I had been kept posted of much that passed during the week of His Majesty's visit, and I was quite prepared to be accosted on the subject of it when I appeared in Brussels.

At the State balls there, besides the supper, it was the custom, for those privileged, to "process" early in the evening to partake of a sort of *gôûter*, which was served from a long buffet in a room apart, at which their Majesties were present, and to which the Corps Diplomatique was invited. When the King saw me, he beckoned to me to approach, and began at once : " On vous attendait à Chatsworth la semaine dernière, vous auriez dû venir, il y avait de très belles dames, on s'y amusait énormément," etc., etc.

To my surprise, as I was explaining the reasons for my absence, the King suddenly said, " Donnez-moi votre bras, j'ai quelques mots à vous dire." I offered H.M. my arm, and thus we promenaded up and down the long room, while the rest of the company regarded the incident with interest. And specially so, for at that very moment there was a rumour of strained relations between Belgium and ourselves, à propos of an episode which had recently occurred in the Congo. Mr. Stokes, a British subject, had been arrested and accused of selling arms to Arab chiefs with whom the Congo State was at



war. He had been tried by court-martial and condemned to be hanged, which sentence had been summarily carried out by a Belgian officer, Captain Lothaire, without time or opportunity being allowed to lodge an appeal before the Court of Justice at Boma. Our Government had strongly protested and queried the legality of Captain Lothaire's action, demanding his recall and the payment of an indemnity.

Naturally the members of the Corps Diplomatique were convinced that this episode was the subject on which the King wished to speak, all the more so as His Majesty kept up the conversation in a low tone which no one else could catch a word of.

And all this interest, if they had only known it, was quite superfluous. In the old days at Aix, among the little coterie there which the King delighted to honour, were some of the most amusing and witty of the cosmopolitan society then at Aix, and during the meetings which took place at the Villa des Fleurs and elsewhere, much badinage and gossip enlivened the general conversation. The King himself was one of the most brilliant conversationalists and raconteurs I ever came across. And so this special mark of favour bestowed upon me arose because His Majesty had just heard a new and racy bit of gossip which he was anxious to pass on, and I happened to be the fortunate recipient of this confidence.

Needless to say, when we re-entered the ball-room I was the object of many enquiries as to the subject of our conversation, which I



*Mandy, Bucharest.*

QUEEN ELISABETH OF RUMANIA  
("Carmen Sylva").



managed successfully to parry by joking allusions to *la haute politique*.

The *affaire* Stokes dragged on till 1896, when, after twice being tried, Captain Lothaire was finally acquitted, notwithstanding the fact that his proceeding had been recognised as decidedly illegal, and a heavy indemnity had been paid without demur.

I remember a conversation with Prince Albert, now the King of the Belgians, then about twenty years of age.

He had just been appointed to a regiment which wore the bearskin. He was interested to find that my regiment did so too, and I have never forgotten that talk about the merits of our respective headgear.

My official connection with Brussels was brought to a close during the South African War, when, at my own suggestion, for reasons which seemed to me sound and of advantage, Lord Salisbury accepted my resignation of my post there, and appointed in my stead the late Colonel Repington (then Colonel à Court).

## CHAPTER XXV

### PARIS

PRESIDENT FÉLIX FAURE—THE DUC D'AUMALE—PRINCE AND PRINCESS JOACHIM MURAT—MM. HANOTAUX AND DELCASSÉ

PRESIDENT FÉLIX FAURE during his tenure of office was most friendly to me on occasions when he met me officially or otherwise. He was both in appearance and manner without exception quite the most magnificent person I ever met. The glossy shine and the curly brim of his hat were worthy of Lord Hardwicke of those days, while his courtly manner and tall stately presence were those of the ideal President.

One day, in course of conversation, he told me that he always considered he owed his knowledge of business and *savoir-faire* to the fact that he had for some years been a clerk in an office in Liverpool, and he looked upon his early training in England as a big factor towards his success in after-life.

I met him riding in the Bois almost daily, at an early hour, and his salutation and sweep of the hat were models which any head of a State might justly envy.

The funeral accorded to him on his sudden and lamented death was the most trying State function I have ever attended. Lord Pembroke, Sir Stanley Clarke, Colonel Arthur Davidson, and I formed the British deputation attending



the ceremony. The funeral procession started from the Elysée at 10 a.m., and with the exception of about an hour's halt at Notre Dame for the service, we spent the day tramping at slow march round Paris, and it was not until 5 p.m. at Père la Chaise that Stanley Clarke and I got into our carriage, where we fell like wolves on the provender I had provided.

In a funeral procession, under close observation of the multitude all day long, the only chance of food we got till then was as we crossed a bridge, where troops lining the route were the only spectators. While crossing that bridge I shared with my colleagues the four sandwiches I carried in my pouch, and we munched them as we marched along. The strain and discomfort we suffered that day are indescribable.

#### THE DUC D'AUMALE

Among the many pleasant recollections of my time in France are those of two visits I paid to the château at Chantilly by the kind invitation of the Duc d'Aumale, who was then in residence there. Banished from France in 1866, he had, by the time I came to Paris, been allowed to return and live at Chantilly, where H.R.H. was always most hospitable towards foreign visitors, and delighted in showing them his magnificent collection of pictures by old masters, of which he was exceedingly proud.

On one occasion I was honoured by lunching alone with the Duke, and after luncheon he took me himself round the pictures. Though then well on in years, he was as keen in intellect and

his memory as good as that of a young man, and I enjoyed immensely listening to memories of his past busy life in Algeria and elsewhere. Walking with his stick, he accompanied his visitors round the picture galleries, and his knowledge of every work of art was a revelation to me.

That day when alone with him I stopped short opposite to a small portrait which caught my attention. H.R.H. asked me what I was looking at so closely. I replied that I seemed to remember this picture, but I was unable to recall how or where I knew it. It was, I think, by Clouet, and I asked the Duke if I might take it down, to which he readily consented. On turning it over I found on the back some note in the handwriting of my stepfather, and I at once "placed" the picture. It used to hang at Colworth in a corridor, the walls of which were lined on both sides by small historical portraits, works by Holbein, Cranach, Janet, etc., and had been sold with the Magniac Collection on my stepfather's death. I asked the Duke if he remembered where and when he had acquired it, and he told me he had bought it not very long before at one of the French Rothschilds' sales. They had, I was told, been large purchasers at the Colworth sale.

It was a curious coincidence to come across an old friend of my boyhood, and be reminded so many years afterwards of the treasures amongst which we boys had been brought up, and which I always regretted after that we were not worthy of, for in those days when at home our minds were occupied chiefly with hunting and shooting.

Prince and Princess Joachim Murat were among my kindest friends during those Paris days, and I regret never to have had the opportunity to see them again. I shall never forget, and always be grateful for, the friendly counsel and support given me by Prince Murat on a certain occasion.

I was one of a cheery party staying at their Château de Chambly for a race meeting at Chantilly, to which the Prince drove us on his coach, changing horses half-way. One day our host asked me, in order to rest his arm, to take charge of the second team, and I look back with pleasure to that drive to Chantilly and back, with Madame de Gallifet beside me on the box.

I met from time to time during my years in Paris the two successive Ministers for Foreign Affairs, MM. Hanotaux and Delcassé, and was much interested whenever I got an opportunity to listen to their views.

On one occasion, shortly before I left Paris in 1901, I was talking to M. Delcassé about the long-continued strain in relations between the two countries. I remarked that prospects looked more hopeful than they had for some time, and asked him was there not some chance now of improvement if taken advantage of?

He agreed that the present moment offered a good opportunity of success if carefully handled, but he added that any chance of a lasting rapprochement between our two countries was extremely doubtful, "for this reason," he said: "you will never get a Frenchman to understand an Englishman, or an Englishman to understand a Frenchman." I said that I feared his remark

applied to us also even nearer home, for, to my mind, he had exactly described the main cause of trouble between England and Ireland.

Since I came home from abroad I have frequently had proof of how correct was M. Delcassé's summing-up of the situation.

Even now it seems impossible for some of us to realise that, if militarism existed in France in the days of Napoleon, it certainly disappeared with the Second Empire. Anyone who lived in France during my time there, and learnt to appreciate how the memories of the *année terrible*, with the dread of its recurrence, hung for years like a dark cloud over our gallant allies in the Great War, knows that the determination of France to safeguard her frontiers for the future in no way savours of militarism.



*Mandy, Bucharest.*

PRINCE FERDINAND OF RUMANIA  
(Afterwards King of Rumania).





## CHAPTER XXVI

### YACHTING IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

#### A COLLISION AT SEA—THE “POISSON D'AVRIL”—MOTORING IN FRANCE IN THE NINETIES

I HAVE often been tempted by offers of a yachting trip in the Mediterranean, but somehow the obvious advantage of travelling about in one's own house amongst such surroundings always seemed to me to be somewhat discounted on occasions when visiting friends on their yachts in a harbour. Comparing the difference of a comfortable hotel to the surroundings met with in a port along the Riviera, I always decided to “stick to the shore.” But on one occasion I was tempted to disregard my prejudices.

While lunching at the Ritz in Paris with two dear friends, Lord and Lady Dudley, I was invited to accompany them on a yachting trip. He had hired Lord Cowley's yacht the *Puritan*, and proposed that we should join her at Marseilles and go to Valetta, timing the voyage so as to see the arrival of the *Ophir*, on board which the Duke and Duchess of York (now King George and Queen Mary) were proceeding for their official visit to India. I fixed up my work, got leave from my Ambassador, and we left for Marseilles. There we were delayed by five days of very rough

weather, but eventually, as the gale abated, we left Marseilles in the evening.

About eight p.m. I was on deck waiting to go below for dinner. Lady Dudley was in her cabin, not coming to dinner, for the yacht was pitching considerably. Lord Dudley had gone below to see her before dinner. I had gone on the bridge with the Captain; a good stiff breeze was blowing and it was pitch dark. The Captain had just told me we were nearing the Ile d'If (of *Monte Cristo* fame), when I saw on our port bow a long line of lights approaching rapidly as if to cut us off from the shore.

I called the Captain's attention to the possibility of a collision if we held on our course. He replied that by the rule of the road, we seeing their starboard and they seeing our port light, it was for them to alter their course, not us. He naturally preferred to follow the rule of the road, until suddenly we both perceived it was too late. We then went hard a port in defiance of all regulations, by which we just saved being cut in two amidships, and at that moment a great vessel rushed across our bows, shaving them and carrying away our bowsprit and jib-boom. Then for what seemed an interminable time a great mass of electric-lighted shipping towered over us, crashing through our bows, and seeming every second to be going to turn us over and crush us.

Suddenly the sponson of a gun came along right over my head and just missing the bridge. I told the Captain this was a man-of-war we had to do with and we must look out for the aft

sponson, which when it came, by God's mercy, also passed just over our heads. At length the long line of light left us and rushed away into the darkness, leaving us ripped across the bows and crippled. The pumps were at once manned, life-belts distributed, and Lord Dudley ran below to fetch Lady Dudley. So near were we to the Ile d'If that, in spite of the high wind, I could hear the waves dashing on the rocks there, but luckily the breeze was towards the mainland, and not behind us.

When Lady Dudley came on deck, we put a life-belt on her, and she ran again below to get a favourite monkey from her cabin. While she was gone, I asked Lord Dudley if she could swim, and he replied, "Not a stroke." I said that provided we could avoid the rocks of the Ile d'If, we could take her between us and strike out for the shore, the wind being favourable. There seemed then no chance of time to lower the only boat left undamaged.

To make matters worse, suddenly another long line of light appeared coming from the same direction, but luckily on a slightly different course, and a second huge ship passed at a terrific speed between us and the Ile d'If. I told Lady Dudley this must be a part of a French fleet, and that by all rules the ship that had run us down must turn and come back to our assistance, but that this must of course take time. We waited in hopes, but there was no sign of any alteration of course, and the two long lines of light disappeared in the darkness.

Just as we were preparing either to try to lower

the remaining boat or, failing that, take to the water, the Captain came up on deck with the welcome news that they were making good work with the pumps, in fact that we were just holding our own, and he thought by keeping them going hard, if he could keep the undamaged side of the vessel to the weather, we might manage to crawl back into Marseilles harbour; and this we did.

It seems there had been a strike and a threatening of riot in Marseilles that day, and the French fleet had been suddenly ordered to leave Villefranche for Marseilles. Seven cruisers had started hurriedly, and we had unfortunately come across two of them.

Next morning at the earliest possible moment I went with Lord Dudley to tell our story to our Consul, Mr. Gurney, a friend of mine, and he at once accompanied us on a visit to the Port Admiral. A most courteous naval officer received us. When he had heard our story he expressed astonishment that, as he said, seven cruisers had come in last night from Villefranche, and no report of this had reached him. I remarked *sotto voce* in English to Dudley, "We must get down to the harbour at once." I had noticed overnight while making our way back to Marseilles that our anchor was covered with paint, and in the clear light of the morning had recognised the grey colour of the French men-of-war.

With Gurney accompanying us, we rushed down to the port and made the tour of the harbour in our launch, flying the white ensign of the R.Y.S.



In the outer harbour we found six cruisers and all quiet, but where was the seventh? We penetrated into the inner harbour, and there lay an enormous cruiser with her crew busily at work painting out a long deep scratch extending nearly the length of the vessel. We went alongside and asked a lieutenant who came to the gangway if we could see the captain of the cruiser, as we came from the yacht which they had run down last night. The young officer stared at the white ensign, started at the word "yacht," and replied: "Oh, you mean the vessel which ran into us last night." He went away and soon returned to usher us into the captain's state-room. This officer was most civil, and evidently overcome at learning what class of vessel he had run into. Dudley introduced himself and me, mentioning my official status in France. As courteously as possible I got the French captain's story, and I discovered he knew all about the incident. In course of his remarks he unfortunately let slip the words: "I took you for a *remorqueur*." "Oh," I said, "you surely don't mean that if you run into a tug, you don't turn back to render assistance?" On this he made some excuse, and I did not pursue the subject. Later, before we left, we invited the captain to call and see the damage done. I could see by that time that he had renounced all idea of putting the blame on us.

We returned to the *Puritan*, and ere long the captain visited us.

I shall never forget his face as he came on the quay and on board, when he saw what a state

we were in. He was throughout most civil and apologetic, and had it not been for the cruelty of not turning to make enquiry, coupled with the attempt to cover up what had been done, I would have been sorry for him. As it was, the French naval authorities were most courteous and sympathetic, and agreed to pay all costs incurred ; but of course we had to renounce our trip.

The affair made a great stir along the Riviera and in Paris. My friend Gordon Bennett, proprietor of *The New York Herald*, at the time staying in his villa at Beaulieu, gave me later an incredible version of the incident, as to which I told him I was certain he was misinformed. According to him the French fleet in those waters had a rule of their own, whereby they never altered their course, but expected everyone to make way for them. In vain I argued with Bennett that this must be impossible, for at night, in the darkness, no one could distinguish the French fleet from other vessels. For this reason alone, apart from many others, I told him his argument was fallacious, but once he had got an idea in his head he was not easy to persuade otherwise.

The episode was much discussed in the Paris clubs, and one member of the Rue Royale remarked to me that it only wanted one point worse to complete the discomfiture of the captain, i.e. that it might have been the British *Naval Attaché* on board the *Puritan* instead of the *Military*. In any case I learnt afterwards that the officer was severely punished, and in

view of his heartless attitude at the time I could not but feel that the decision was justified.

In after-years we three often discussed the narrow escape we had that night. Lady Dudley always attributed our coming through unscathed to the fact that a day or so before our departure they had paid a visit to and said a prayer at the Chapel of Notre Dame de la Garde, perched up on the cliff above Marseilles.

The dear lady! How little we then realised that many years later she was to meet her end by drowning while bathing at Inver, co. Galway.

#### THE "POISSON D'AVRIL"

I am quite aware of the scepticism which is aroused whenever a statement appears on the following subject, and I am prepared to take the consequences of placing on record the following story. I can vouch for the facts as stated, having seen them myself. Moreover, I am confident that if the story ever meets the eye of one or other of my two companions on that day, they will confirm what I say.

One day at Nice Lord Wolverton invited me on board his cutter the *Mildred*, which he had entered in a race during the Nice Regatta. The only other friend on board for the race was Johnnie Ward (now Sir John Ward, Extra Equerry to the King).

We had a fair wind during the morning, and all went well until about one p.m., when the wind dropped, and about an hour later a dead calm set in. Nothing, to my mind, is more boring than a calm during a sailing race, but one thing

it conduces to is sleep, and we three were soon all asleep on our backs on the deck.

I was aroused by hearing Johnnie Ward exclaim, "My God, look at this." I jumped up and ran to the side of the vessel and looked where he was pointing. There I saw, about a couple of feet below water and slowly rising towards the surface, what looked like a face, with a head like a large plum-pudding and round large bulging eyes. Long ears seemed to float behind it as it rose in the water. It seemed shy of coming up to the surface and evidently took notice of us.

By now the whole crew were staring at it, and an old sailor whose attention was called to it said he had been many years sailing on that coast, but had never seen anything like it. As we looked it slowly sank out of sight. A few minutes afterwards a shout from the other side of the vessel announced it was again coming up. This time we threw bread into the water, and the face came right to the surface, touched the bread with its mouth, but slowly sank again. This happened several times. Gradually it got bolder, and once, to our astonishment, stood out of the water about two or three feet, showing a round head like a football with the long ears flowing down behind and the thick straight body of a big conger eel, which seemed to go down a long way in the water.

Alas! this was too much for one of the crew, who stupidly picked up a long boat-hook, rushed to the side, and struck at it. Of course the hook was not long enough, fell short with a splash,

and the head at once slowly commenced to sink under the water and finally disappeared. I can only describe the movement as slowly sinking out of sight perpendicularly. We never saw it moving horizontally, and every movement was a very slow one ; it just came up and sank down, and once, as I say, it stood out of the water.

Of course no one ever believed our story, and we were laughed at all along the Riviera about our *poisson d'avril*, it being the month of April.

#### MOTORING IN FRANCE IN THE NINETIES

It may not be generally known how far ahead of us France was in introducing the motor as a means of locomotion. This fact I set down to two causes.

The Englishman's love for the horse delayed his acceptance and adoption of mechanical transport ; which, on the other hand, appealed strongly to our good neighbours across the Channel, both on the road and later in the air. I, of course, only refer to early days.

Again, our innate conservatism and slow, cautious methods for the introduction of any change are markedly in contrast to the quick enthusiasm with which our neighbours approach anything in the nature of a novelty. Does not the submarine afford another proof of this contention ?

Possibly the strict regulations in force at the time retarded our progress, but in any case, as I say, France was at first far ahead of us as regards mechanical transport ; and during periodical visits to London in those days the point struck me



each time more forcibly. When in Paris the motor was already making a big show in the streets, in London it was a rarity, to be stared at as a curiosity, and not infrequently abused. It was most interesting to compare the conditions in the two capitals, as the relative proportions of horse and motor traction gradually began to balance and finally changed places.

About this time I met at the Ritz in Paris that pioneer of motoring in England, Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, who told me he had come over to study the progress in this connection which had been made in France, and I remember saying I thought he would find Paris well ahead of London.

My first experience of motoring, I think in 1896, was with my good friends the Prince and Princesse de Poix, when we were all staying at Deauville during the season there. So far as I remember the car was a 4-h.p. one, with a body shaped like a bathing-machine, entrance through a door in rear, with, of course, solid-tyred wheels. We frequently had to get out and help push the car up the hills, but we made up time by letting her go for all she was worth downhill.

One day while motoring along the sea-coast and descending, in the manner described, a steep incline on the road to the town of Villers-sur-Mer, about half-way down the hill two wagons, one ascending, the other descending, blocked the way. On our off side was a precipitous cliff down to the sea, on the near side a ditch and steep embankment. A sudden strong application of the brake resulted in depositing Prince de Poix and the

chauffeur over the bonnet of the car in the road, while the Princess and I, who occupied the two back seats, found ourselves in the front of the car. Marvellous to relate, no one was damaged, and the only harm the car suffered was that the brake had severed the solid tyre as if cut with a razor.

In those days of the motor's infancy, so frequent were the mishaps as to give occasion for a new meaning to the word *panne*, henceforth descriptive of a motor breakdown, and a term at that time much in vogue.

Some time after the Deauville episode I was invited by Gordon Bennett to motor with him to luncheon with an American artist who lived in a villa in the neighbourhood of Bougival.

Bennett, accompanied by an Egyptian Prince, whose name I should but cannot recall, for he was an old friend, called for me at my rooms in the Avenue du Bois, and no sooner had we started than he calmly informed me it was only the second time he had ever driven a motor. On the Prince, who did not speak English, asking me what he said, knowing our host's casual methods, I considered it wiser for his peace of mind to frame my reply vaguely.

However, all went fairly well, and with a few trifling anxieties we reached our destination safely. We had a most cheery luncheon, the fair sex being represented by several charming models who were posing in the garden of the villa for a group in a sylvan scene which our host was at work upon. I remember one of my neighbours deploring to me the number of wasps

which had seriously disturbed her that morning while posing, scantily clad and balanced on the branch of a tree.

We started back soon after luncheon, and Bennett proved a far more skilful driver than his small experience would have led one to expect. Beyond a rather narrow shave of going into the river near Suresnes, where the road descends sharply to the valley of the Seine, we arrived safely back in Paris.

I am reminded, as I write, of my first motor drive in England by hearing of a Daimler car at the moment on view in Reading, and which I am told is stated to be King Edward's first car.

Not long after the incident recorded above, I was staying at Sandringham, and the Prince of Wales kindly proposed to take Arthur Paget and me out for a drive in his Daimler car, which H.R.H. had only recently acquired. It was a four-seater car; the Prince sat in front with the chauffeur, while Arthur Paget and I occupied the back seats. I remember how we all felt the cold that day, as in those early days of motoring one was apt to be insufficiently wrapped up when going fast in an open car.

On our return from a fast spin round the country, which we all enjoyed immensely, the Prince informed us that at one time we had reached a speed of forty-five miles an hour, which for those days was surely a fine record.

I have every reason to believe that the car now on view within a few miles of my home is the identical one in which we made this expedition.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### THE 1898 MANŒUVRES

IN 1898, manœuvres on a big scale for our army were planned, the Duke of Connaught and Sir Redvers Buller to command the opposing forces, each to consist of a Cavalry Brigade and three Infantry Divisions.

While in Paris I got a letter from General Buller asking me to come "as an independent gentleman" and ride about with him during the manœuvres. I replied that I would be glad to come, but that without the permission of the Q.M.G. I could not leave France to come to England and appear at manœuvres. When Buller approached Evelyn Wood on the subject, the latter said he could not consent to me coming over independently, as, he said, he had selected me to act as one of the umpires. Now, General Sir Henry Brackenbury had been appointed chief umpire, and when I attended the first meeting of umpires, which was held before the manœuvres commenced, I found that Buller had evidently already been in communication with him. Brackenbury, in the course of his address to the assembled umpires, said: "I am going to create a new appointment which is to be styled 'Reporting Officer to Head Quarters,' and I intend to offer this post to Colonel Douglas Dawson. His duties will be to be attached to

the Commander-in-Chief of one or other of the opposing forces, to note carefully every item of information which reaches them, either in the field or in camp, and the measures taken consequent on that information. Further, in case he might become too partial, he will change over every fourth day from one army to the other." In a way, though only partially, Buller's wish was thus fulfilled. I may thus claim to have had the opportunity, at any rate, to see more of the 1898 manœuvres, and under more favourable conditions, than any other officer. I was to report confidentially at the close of the manœuvres. In view of after-events and the near approach of war in South Africa, especially bearing in mind the prominent part played in the war by officers who had responsible commands during the manœuvres, the operations in 1898 assumed special interest.

I began by being attached to Buller's Head Quarters at Wishford Camp, Hants, close to the sea, just before operations commenced. The first problem Buller gave me before we moved out from Wishford was to draw up a report as to how long it would take him to move with his whole force out of his camp, from the moment he gave the order to move until the rear of the column was clear of the camping ground. I made a careful study of the conditions, and that same evening at mess I handed him my report. As usual my memory fails me as to detail, but the gist of my report was this: "You are here encamped with a strength of three Infantry Divisions, approximately a normal Army Corps.



Your camping-ground, certainly its surroundings, may be best described as marshy land, which necessitates metalled roads for transport of troops. You have only one metalled road which can possibly be utilised by troops for purposes of exit. Were this force free of accessories, it is quite easy to work out approximately the time it takes a corps to pass a given spot, but we have here accumulated such an amount of tentage, stores, baggage, and other impedimenta, the time allowed would, to put it roughly, have at least to be doubled."

Shortly afterwards in France I attended French manœuvres, where five Army Corps were opposed by a skeleton force. On one occasion the five Corps advanced simultaneously by parallel roads, and one of the Corps was confined to a single road. I seized the occasion to meet the latter Corps at a cross-road and checked every unit as it passed. The result was my sending Buller a long scroll in detail, unit by unit, showing the exact time it took for an Army Corps to pass a certain point.

When discussing the subject that night at Wishford, I told Buller that at all the manœuvres I had attended on the Continent during the past eight years I had never seen a tent, and that I believed we were the only Power in Europe which still adhered to them. I then enlarged on the advantage of the so-called billeting, or possibly better defined as cantonment, system in vogue on the Continent, where the term "billet" had a different significance from that given it by us.

Sir Redvers told me that Lord Wolseley and Sir Evelyn Wood were coming next day (Sunday) to luncheon, and he asked me to repeat my arguments to them. That Sunday luncheon before the manœuvres began was a most interesting and instructive experience to me, for I was enabled and even encouraged to discuss with the authorities many of the points I had noted and written about during my long experience on the Continent. Lord Wolseley questioned me closely on the subject of "billeting" abroad, and I explained that word was applied there to a method widely differing from ours. I said that during manœuvres all big buildings, public halls, empty warehouses, barns and granaries, farm buildings, stables, etc., were utilised for putting a *roof and shelter* over the men for the night; and thus wrapped in their blankets, though packed close on the floor, they were protected from wet and cold.

I repeated that with this system I had never seen a tent used at manœuvres, and it offered the enormous advantage of economising transport and baggage, coupled with speedy entry, housing, and exit next morning, while the only traces of occupation left on departure were the numbers and names of the latest occupying unit chalked on the doors. Further, I said, this system was locally popular, a very small nominal rent per head being paid. On Lord Wolseley remarking the system would adapt itself to a thickly populated district, I said I had seen it worked successfully on the vast plains of Hungary.

One of the topics touched on, which I remember

amused me, was the status of officers of the medical service. While in conversation with Sir Evelyn Wood, the subject of their ambition for military rank and other attributes of the combatant officer came up, and Lord Wolseley struck in with, "For God's sake, leave the doctors alone. Give them as many military titles, hats, stripes, and swords as they want, or we won't get any." There was, it seemed, difficulty in obtaining medical officers for the army, a most serious consideration, solved, I believe, by the wise measures adopted a short time later.

As may be expected, the duties allotted to me gave me an insight into the inner working of these manœuvres which was practically unique, and I found that my varied experiences of manœuvres with foreign armies enabled me to make comparisons which were possibly of some small use when, at the conclusion, I sent in my report. The latter was, of course, strictly confidential, and to enter into details here would be out of place. But to this day I retain a deep feeling of gratitude to Sir Redvers Buller for having been the means whereby I had an opportunity to be in personal touch, during a period which was soon after proved to be a critical one, not only with the Commanders-in-Chief and Divisional Commanders on both sides, but with many of the able officers composing their staffs.

At the annual dinner of the Camel Corps in 1899, just before the South African War broke out, Sir Redvers was in the chair, and that night

he conversed freely with me, not only about the previous year's manœuvres, but also on the prospects before him, for he had already been noted for the command which he shortly after assumed in South Africa. Our conversation only closed as we saw the General into a hansom in the Strand, and wished him "God-speed" as he drove off.

I have reason to believe that at that time he intended to ask me to serve on his staff there, but, as will be seen, I learnt later that I was not to be allowed to leave Paris, and for this reason the offer, had it even been contemplated, was to my great disappointment withheld.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### THE HAGUE PEACE CONFERENCE, 1899

WHEN the assembling of the first Hague Peace Conference in 1899 was under consideration, Lord Salisbury did me the honour to select me as the British Military Representative. I was naturally much flattered, and I hope I may be excused for saying that I took the selection as a mark of recognition for my work in the past years, which, commencing in 1886, I had spent largely on the Continent studying foreign army organisations.

Further, there was, I ventured to think, another reason for the choice. With nearly every one of the Heads of Missions named by the Great Powers for the Conference I had long been associated, both officially and socially. Count Goluchowski representing Austria, Count Nigra Italy, and Prince Bülow Germany, were all personal friends of mine. Moreover, I had at one time or the other been brought personally in touch with the leading military authorities in the six capitals to which I had been officially appointed during the years I spent on the Continent; while I was on terms of friendship with Military Attachés from other countries in Europe, as well as from America and Japan. Thus I had learnt the views and customs of foreign officers, and was personally acquainted with many of their Generals.

The selection, therefore, which was absolutely



unsought for by me, opened prospects which delighted me, and I was pleased to find that I was to have as a colleague the German Naval Attaché in Paris, an Admiral with whom I was on the most friendly terms, who was brother-in-law of the late Sir Eyre Crowe.

As may be imagined, I at once began to note down subjects which I might bring to the notice of my future chief (Sir Julian Pauncefoot, the representative of Great Britain at the Conference, then our Ambassador in Washington), and which it seemed to me might offer useful possibilities for discussion, though I must admit I was sceptical as to any real practical result forthcoming from such a conference. However, the mere fact that the idea emanated from Russia was, I thought, a hopeful sign, while I was determined that in any case it should not be my fault if, by hook or crook, Germany could not be forced during the discussions to expose her hand. I anticipated also great possibilities as regards the other two partners to the Triple Alliance, for though I felt convinced of the adherence of Austria, hypnotised as she was by Berlin, I knew that there was no love lost between the two countries.

My consternation may therefore be imagined when I was later informed that, red tape having stepped in and prevailed, a general officer would go to The Hague in my place, my rank being only that of colonel.

General Sir John Ardagh was selected and attended the Conference. He was a most distinguished and highly-educated officer, who had recently become head of our Intelligence Depart-

ment, and under whom, therefore, for some years I had the honour to work, and my associations with him, and all I learnt from them, are among the happiest of my recollections.

When, at the conclusion of the Conference, my German naval colleague returned to Paris, I tried to pump him as to his experiences at The Hague, but all I could get out of him was that he had learnt that the so-called great men were, generally speaking, not on a much higher level of intelligence than our two humble selves. I jokingly remarked that it was perhaps as well for him that I had not been there.

Shortly after I went, as I did nearly every year, to stay with my friends Mr. and Mrs. Bischoffsheim in their villa at Monte Carlo.

One morning while walking on the terrace there I met Lord Hartington, then Lord President of the Council. He told me he had much regretted that the idea of sending me to The Hague had not come off. "But," he added, "I consoled myself with the thought that I was sure you would not care to be associated with something that was bound to be a failure." I replied that I had also had my doubts and was sceptical as to a successful result, but that there were one or two subjects on which I had hoped to urge attention, and I was disappointed at not having had the opportunity to do so.

He took me to a seat and asked me to tell him what my points were, and during the long conversation which ensued the following are the subjects I remember as mentioning.

(1) Surely our guiding principle should be to

make it clear to the whole of Europe what Germany's real aims were as regards the future, especially having regard to her naval policy.

(2) It might, I thought, be of use to call attention to the constitution and organisation of the Swiss Army, to which I was accredited as Military Attaché at the time. The Swiss, I said, had determined so to organise their army as to prevent a recurrence of what had happened in Napoleon's time, when Switzerland was made a highway for foreign armies. They had therefore created an army which, with its well-planned system of fortifications and up-to-date armament of them, would make it nearly impossible, even for Germany, to violate their neutrality with impunity; while their army was maintained at a yearly cost so low, as to seem incredible in these days. The highest rank was that of colonel, its peace footing was that of four divisions, increased on mobilisation to four corps.

The point I wished to press here was that this army was organised solely for *defensive* purposes, and that, so far as I could judge, was practically incapable of penetrating an enemy country. Might not some useful purpose be achieved by a study of these conditions as an example for other Powers?

(3) But what seemed to me the most important point that suggested itself was that if any agreement resulted from the Conference, set forth in writing and signed by the head of each mission, the final clause of such agreement might contain a paragraph something to the following effect, viz. should any signatory Power at any time

break any of the conditions of the agreement, the rest of the signatory Powers should *ipso facto* break off diplomatic relations.

Years after, when Mr. Wilson propounded his League of Nations scheme, though I admit that, as a preventive of war, I had but little faith in it, I wondered whether something on the lines of this idea would not long ago have met the case. What would have happened if such an agreement had been in force in August 1914 when Germany violated Belgian neutrality? Had she dared to do so, which I take leave to doubt, Bernstorff and Dumba would at least have been handed their passports in Washington, with results that can be left to the imagination.

As for Lord Hartington's view of my most humbly offered opinions, I knew his reserved nature and sound common sense far too well to try to extract it from him.

## CHAPTER XXIX

A REPORT FROM THE TRANSVAAL, 1899—AT THE WAR OFFICE—  
A SPOKE IN THE WHEEL—A FAREWELL DINNER

I HAVE alluded already to the many friends I made during my travels who were kind enough, from time to time, to assist me by sending me information.

Amongst them was one whose name and nationality I suppress for obvious reasons. Suffice it to say he was not an Englishman or a Frenchman. He was one of the most popular of the many foreign residents in Paris, whose word was absolutely to be relied upon, and when he quitted Paris he settled in South Africa, whence he used to correspond with me.

Some time in the spring of 1899, the year the South African War broke out, he sent me a most important document, having previously posted me as to what was hatching in the Transvaal. This paper purported to be a copy of the estimates for that year for secret service in the Boer Army.

I cannot remember its detail closely, but I shall never forget the start it gave me when I read it. The sum budgeted for was so hugely in excess of anything we had ever imagined in that connection, and the purposes for which it



was required so astounding, that I at once decided to pass on the information.

A very large amount was allocated to suborning British subjects in Cape Colony and Natal; a further huge sum was allotted for efforts to bribe the Press in Paris, Berlin, Petersburg, and New York, while the only legitimate expenditure was for armament, the amount of which positively staggered me.

Guns in very large numbers were evidently on order both from French and German firms, and I had only recently been able to furnish some information on the importance of the new French .75 gun. As I found the Boers were in treaty for the Canet gun, the information was specially interesting.

I went to London at once, and took my document to the Foreign Office, where I showed it to two high officials, both personal friends of mine who afterwards attained great distinction, both of them becoming Ambassadors.

They were astonished at the figures I showed them, and, after we had discussed them, one of them said, "This is all very well, but I may tell you it is not at all in accordance with the information which reaches Lord Salisbury." I replied that I was quite aware of this, and therefore I trusted it would not be long before it *did* reach him.

We had a long and quite friendly discussion on the subject, and I left with an assurance that my document would be carefully considered. Just as I got to the door one of my friends called out, "One moment, Douglas. Why are you so confident

the Boers are bent on war this year?" And as I left the room I replied, "Because they believe they can beat us."

#### AT THE WAR OFFICE

When I first went abroad it was agreed that I need not confine my work to recording changes and reforms in army organisation as they occurred from time to time. Carefully studied reports of the annual war budgets of the countries with which I was concerned mostly supplied any detail of this sort.

There were, however, opportunities for observation which now and then seemed to offer a chance for calling attention to subjects that might be of interest. The results of such, when tendered, were, so far as was visible, rarely encouraging.

On one occasion, certainly, I had no reason to complain that my impressions did not receive consideration.

At the time Sir Redvers Buller was A.G., when I was over for the day from Paris, I entered his room and found Lord Wolseley (C.-in-C.) and Sir Evelyn Wood (Q.M.G.) with him.

"Ah," said Buller, "here's the young man who says we spend too much money on the army."

I replied, "No, sir; you mistake my arguments."

"Well," he said, "tell the Commander-in-Chief what you *do* say."

I told Lord Wolseley that the gist of my contention was that we did not get our money's worth for what we spent.

He encouraged me to state my points, which I did in some detail. I was pleased to find he had

already noticed the arguments I had used in despatches, and I left the three authorities discussing the subject.

On the occasion of another visit to the War Office towards the end of my time in Paris, during a conversation with Buller and Evelyn Wood they rather scouted some statement I made, and I then ventured to infer that scepticism on the part of those who never came abroad to see for themselves was quite imaginable. The way in which suggestions were received at home and the seemingly hopeless chance of their being given serious consideration were, I pleaded, discouraging to those who were sent abroad and had learnt by personal experience on the spot, perhaps erroneously, to look through the foreigners' spectacles. In fact, I said, the impression I had got was that nothing that did not emanate from Pall Mall was worthy of consideration.

The two Generals received my remarks most good-humouredly, and even invited me to quote examples in support of my statement. So I seized the occasion, and, having recently come on a note I made after that interview, I find the following among the points I touched on that day.

I had periodically, commencing in the early nineties, called attention to the reputed construction by Herr Zeppelin, on an island in Lake Constance, of a huge "Dirigible," in a long building to approach which my efforts had repeatedly failed.

Further, I mentioned the importance I had

urged for increasing our food-supply at home, either by enlarging the area under arable or else by laying in vast stores of grain ; of which latter suggestion the only apparent notice taken was to award me the nickname of " Joseph."

The necessity for preparation for home defence, the need for securing our national horse-supply in time of war, the French system of insurance for officers during service, from which cost of pensions was defrayed—these and other subjects, based on what I had heard and seen abroad, had, I said, so far as I knew, been apparently ignored. On leaving the War Office I felt I had made the most of a unique opportunity.

I must admit that on some minor points I received encouragement. Once while at Hom-burg with the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Cambridge being present, the C.-in-C. said to me, " We must change our forage cap. You know every cap in Europe, which do you consider the best ? " I replied, " Undoubtedly the Serbian," which I proceeded to describe as being an improvement on the Russian cap, which itself was, I said, already one better than the German.

When in London a few weeks later, to my surprise I espied in the window of Messrs. Lock, St. James's Street, an old-fashioned shooting-cap very nearly resembling in shape the cap I had referred to, and which I ventured to send to the Duke at the War Office with an explanatory letter. Shortly afterwards the caps of both officers and other ranks were altered, I believe to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Another small innovation I was responsible for

was the swing of the arm by infantry when marching past. Being struck with the air of freedom and pride with which I saw the Jaegers march past the Emperor of Austria, I had urged consideration of a change, which was favourably considered, and which, when adopted, I venture to think was popular with the men and with the public.

Once I was caught in my own net, for, years after I had become a Lieut.-Colonel, I got a letter from Buller calling my attention to the fact that I had never passed "your own examination," and I had hurriedly to cross to Shorncliffe, where an examination for promotion to that rank was about to commence. I only then recalled a report I had sent in years before on the subject.

The ridiculously small salary allotted to a Military Attaché's post, compared to the expense entailed, was a point I called attention to on several occasions. Though nothing was done at the time, I believe the subject was seriously considered later, and I understand with satisfactory results.

#### A SPOKE IN THE WHEEL

When in October 1899 the Boer War broke out, I remained quiet in Paris, for I felt that relations between England and France were at that time on too critical a footing to justify my asking to be allowed to quit my post. However, when, during the "black week," three British columns suffered reverses, and England was mourning losses such as she had never dreamt of, I wrote privately to Lord Wolseley, then Commander-in-Chief.



I told him that at the commencement I had not volunteered, for I doubted the practice of officers asking to leave posts of importance in one part of the world directly a war broke out in another.

But I explained that now, within two months' time, the term of my five years' appointment to Paris expired, and I asked Lord Wolseley to record my name as a volunteer to sail for South Africa the day I was free.

He replied that he could wish all officers shared my views as to volunteering, but that he was afraid my request could not be granted; just then, he said, international questions of vital importance were at issue, accentuated at the moment by the Legations riots in Peking. We could not at the moment afford to "swap horses," he said, and the War Office regretted they could not yet dispense with my services in Paris. In fact, Lord Wolseley said, he must ask me to extend my service in Paris for another year after my term of five years had expired.

I replied that I knew the first duty of a soldier was obedience, and that I would stay on, but I ventured to remind him that I stayed on to oblige the War Office, not myself. Lord Wolseley answered me thanking me for my decision, and told me that I should be treated exactly as if I had commanded a column in the war, and that the first brevet Colonelcy given for the war should be given to me.

It may be hard to believe, but the promised reward did not come.

Shortly after, a private letter which I had

written to a friend, congratulating him on one he had sent to *The Times* (wherein he urged the importance of organisation for home defence), was, by an unlucky series of misunderstandings, made the cause for blocking my promotion, and it was not until 240 Lieut.-Colonels had been passed over my head that I was eventually promoted to full Colonel.

My letter—my name, of course, suppressed—was in all good faith, but most unfortunately, read out in the House of Lords, and was the subject of a heated discussion. Though no name was mentioned, the identity was sufficiently indicated to be recognised, with the result above described.

#### A FAREWELL DINNER

When the time approached for me to resign my post in Paris after passing six years there, Prince d'Arenberg and the Duc de la Force told me they would like to entertain me at a farewell dinner on behalf of my friends in the Jockey Club. The dinner took place at the house of the Duc de la Force in the Champs Elysées.

In a speech made by Prince d'Arenberg proposing my health, after expressing their great regret at my leaving, he added that they hoped that, although I should be no longer living in Paris, I would still retain my membership of the Jockey Club. In replying to the toast, I thanked the Prince for the honour he did me in expressing a hope that I would remain a member of the Jockey Club, but I regretted that as I was only a temporary member, ex-officio during my term

of office at the Embassy, my membership ceased automatically when I resigned my post.

The next day I went to the Jockey Club to take leave of all my friends there. When in the sport-room, the two gentlemen before mentioned took me aside and said, "We were *désolés* to hear what you told us last night at dinner in reference to your membership of the Club. We thought you were a permanent member of it. As you are aware, the feeling in France at this moment is so strong that it would be risky to propose you now for election as a permanent member; but we hope ere long, as soon as matters have quieted down and good feeling is restored, you will allow us both to propose and second you for the Club. Meanwhile," they concluded, "we wish you to remember that, if anything ever tempts you to come back to France, on every racecourse in France your place is with us in the stewards' box."

I have often with pride thought of those parting words of the French sportsmen, and associated them with the final words addressed to me by the Emperor of Austria, after five and six years passed respectively in Austria and France.

## CHAPTER XXX

### THE FOREIGN PRESS—A ROYAL PROGRESS—TARIFF REFORM

DURING the many years I spent officially on the Continent I made a great point of keeping in touch, so far as was possible, with foreign opinion as regards Great Britain. For this purpose I watched carefully the tone of the Press, not only in countries to which I was appointed, but practically all over Europe. These were the years of our "splendid isolation," and the result was anything but comforting to British subjects living abroad. I spoke with both Lord Dufferin and Sir Edmund Monson on the subject several times, and on one occasion the latter remarked that we had to recognise that we were at that moment the best hated Power in Europe.

Now, I was convinced that this anti-English feeling was due mainly to the hostile attitude of the Press, which to me was inexplicable. There was hardly a subject on which, no matter what the nationality, most of the evils from which they suffered were not attributed to *perfidie Albion*.

On one occasion, while travelling in the train from Vienna for a day's racing at Budapest with my friends the Apponyis, I was so incensed by an article in the *Neue Freie Presse* that I flung the newspaper across the compartment at

Tony Apponyi, and said to him, "Why does your infernal Press carry on this campaign of lies and abuse of England? Can't they be told the truth, and have the importance of fair comment impressed upon them?" He replied that the whole of the Austro-Hungarian Press was in the hands of the Jews, and that it was impossible to be answerable for, or curb, the opinions they expressed, for they were too powerful, and this trouble was, he said, getting worse as time went on.

My answer was something to the effect that, in view of my experiences on the Continent, to me their attitude savoured of quarrelling with their best friends.

One day in Paris a portrait appeared in an illustrated newspaper of the Marquis de Morès, son of the Duc de Vallombrosa, whom I had known when we were both boys at Cannes, and who had just been murdered in Africa by the Touaregs, to which tribe he had gone on a political mission. Morès was well known for his Anglophobe views in regard to Africa. Under the portrait were inscribed the words: "Le Marquis de Morès, mort pour la France, assassiné par les Juifs et les Anglais."

I sent a copy of this picture to Frank Bertie, then Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office (afterwards Lord Bertie and our Ambassador in Paris), with a covering letter saying that I was sure Lord Salisbury would be interested to learn who killed Morès.

During the Boer War anti-British feeling in Paris ran very high, and it is unnecessary for me



to refer in detail to the caricatures of and allusions to the Queen with which the Press was filled. The animus which this Press campaign (the origin and source of which was the subject of a report by me to which I have elsewhere alluded) had aroused among the populace of Paris was forcibly brought home to me when I accompanied Sir Edmund Monson to the State opening of the 1900 Exhibition, of which I was a Royal Commissioner.

The streets approaching the Exhibition were thronged with people, and on nearing it our progress was necessarily slow. The sight of my red coat stirred the crowd to a pitch of frenzy, and all around rose the cries, to which by that time I had become accustomed whenever I appeared in uniform: "Vivent les Boers! à bas les Anglais!" As we neared the gates of the Exhibition the attitude of the crowd became very hostile, even menacing, and eventually a rush was made by the mob behind the carriage, and the hind wheels and back of the Ambassadorial barouche were seized hold of, with the object of overturning it. After being subjected to a violent rocking, which in our efforts to avoid being thrown out seriously perturbed our dignity, the Ambassador and I were fortunately rescued by the police, and thus a potential grave incident was partially averted.

But to my mind the *comble* was reached that same year on the occasion when the Prince and Princess of Wales (King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra) passed through Brussels, and a boy, Sipido by name, fired a pistol at the Prince

while he was seated in the train at the station just prior to its departure. By the mercy of Providence the boy missed his aim and the bullet made a ricochet on to the floor of the royal saloon.

This incident was, I felt, solely due to the resentful spirit with which the foreign public was imbued by reason of years of poisonous articles and innuendoes published broadcast all over the continent. The boy had absolutely no reason for his action, beyond the fact that the august Personage at whom he fired was the representative of the country which he had been brought up to believe was responsible for any misery or trouble of which his youthful mind was cognisant.

Now, in my early days of soldiering I had the audacity, under a pseudonym, to inflict on the Press at various times my views on military subjects. Experience gained as time went on, coupled later with a sense of responsibility in view of my official position, had cured me of this habit ; but on this occasion I felt so strongly the harm that was being done, culminating in the Sipido incident, that I wrote, of course under a pseudonym, inviting the attention of *The Times* to the subject.

After describing my experience of the tone of nearly the whole of the Continental Press for years past, not ignoring the mischief wrought abroad by the campaign at home against so-called "methods of barbarism," I stated my conviction that as a result there was growing up in Europe a generation which honestly believed Great Britain

to be a nation of land-grabbers, thieves, and oppressors. I asked consideration of whether our policy of never refuting such charges in the foreign Press was a wise one. It was, I argued, all very well for us to sit calmly trusting to the righteousness of our cause being eventually brought to light. Was it not time, I asked, that these charges, whenever they were made, should be met immediately with a statement of the truth regarding them ?

I received in reply a most courteous letter from a high official of *The Times*, asking me to wait a few days before my letter appeared ; the subject, he said, was under serious consideration, and it was thought to be worthy of a reasoned article.

In due course the letter was published, and with it an article giving a very carefully reasoned expression of opinion. While acknowledging that the views of the writer had on this subject strong special claims for consideration, the gist of it was that they were unable to agree with them. Thus, although my effort failed, I had the satisfaction of knowing that the suggestion had received careful consideration in a quarter which I had always felt, and still feel, was by far the best informed, and the most capable of giving a fair and unbiassed opinion.

Even now I cannot help regretting the decision for many reasons, for, in the light of after-events, I am still inclined to think there was something in my suggestion.

But I found later that there is much to be said with regard to the difficulties involved when a

question arises of publicly refuting misstatements, or uttering warnings, without thereby giving rise to suspicion of *arrière-pensée*.

As examples of what I mean, perhaps the following may explain.

It must have been in 1905 or 1906 when, as H.M.'s Master of the Ceremonies, I was paying an official visit to the Italian Ambassador.

Signor Pansa and his charming Ambassadors were deservedly among the most popular of the Corps Diplomatique in London, and I was always on most friendly terms with His Excellency.

When the object of my visit was accomplished, M. Pansa and I spent some time in conversation on general topics, when, just as I was taking my leave, he broached a subject which took me rather by surprise.

It was at a moment when the international situation was causing grave anxiety in the Chanceries of Europe, and the prospects of steering clear of trouble seemed gloomy indeed. There were many points at issue which disturbed the sense of security for the future, and in some quarters our Press was naturally restless, and even giving expression to a sense of warning which appeared to me to be amply justified.

His Excellency deplored to me the signs of suspicion which he noted in England, saying how much he regretted to remark them at a moment when friendly relations between the Powers were so essential to the peace of Europe, and he concluded by asking me if I could explain the cause of the general distrust of Germany which he was sorry to find in this country.



I at once disowned the propriety for me to give an opinion on such a subject in any but a purely personal capacity, but I added that as an individual I might perhaps reply to his question by asking him another: "What satisfactory explanation had ever been given as to the object of the enormous increase in German naval expenditure which had taken place in recent years?"

On another occasion I had a somewhat similar experience.

In December 1912, during the armistice between Turkey and the Balkan States, a Conference of representatives from all the belligerent Powers assembled in London to discuss terms of peace.

The King had permitted the Conference to be held in St. James's Palace, and I, being then Comptroller of the Lord Chamberlain's Department, was charged with the necessary preparations there for the delegates' reception.

I thus had on several occasions opportunities of making acquaintance with some of them. I must admit that of those among them with whom I came into touch, to me by far the most sympathetic was the Turkish representative, General Osman Nizamy Pasha.

His dignified demeanour and courteous manner, under what must have been to him especially trying and awkward circumstances, seemed to single him out among his confrères; and when I learnt that he was, and had been for some time, Turkish Ambassador in Berlin, I was specially glad to have made his acquaintance.



As will be remembered, these were the days when German diplomacy was specially directed towards securing the dominant position in Constantinople, and this policy, in the able hands of Marschall von Bieberstein, was achieving there a remarkable success. It was, therefore, more likely that the views of a Turkish Ambassador from Berlin would be rather Anglophobe than Anglophil, and in the course of our conversations I was surprised at the freedom from bias and the impartial spirit in which he expressed himself. Indeed, from his remarks on his experiences during his visit to London, I gathered that, with regard to the general opinion held in Germany, he had begun to doubt whether there might not be two sides to the question.

And thus one day in the course of conversation he made a remark to me which, in view of what I had learnt while living on the Continent, left a deep impression on my mind.

He was deploring the anti-British feeling in Berlin, which, as he said, had been gradually increasing, fostered by the Press, the general tone of which was calculated to spread alarm in Germany by representing England as determined to force war upon them.

This line of argument was so palpably inspired from sources whose aim was to justify increased expenditure on armaments that it did not surprise me.

But I was a bit startled to learn that he considered the efforts made in certain quarters in England to arouse a sense of the risk we ran, and the need to prepare for it, to be equally dangerous.

It was news to me that the risk of war was a source of "alarm" in Germany, but my informant evidently believed it to be so, when he concluded by saying how sad it was "to watch two nations drifting into war, through each of them being led to believe that the other was determined to force it on."

I mention my conversations with the two Ambassadors as emphasising the importance of at once repudiating false impressions, before they gain credence abroad.<sup>1</sup>

#### A ROYAL PROGRESS

Mention of the Sipido incident recalls to me another journey made later by King Edward.

Among the many tributes paid to his memory, notably as regards his knowledge of, and marvellous foresight in, foreign policy, there seems to have been only a partial realisation of the unique and dominant part played when—at the critical moment we were left without a friend in the world—his journey in 1903 to Lisbon, Rome, and Paris seemed, as with the stroke of a magician's wand, to dispel the tendency to Anglophobia over the whole of Western Europe.

I had first-hand information of the impression created in Paris. Having settled a visit there for the occasion, I was disappointed at the last moment when illness prevented me carrying it out.

<sup>1</sup> Since writing the above, the letter of the Bishop of Gibraltar which appeared in *The Times* of April 19, 1927, and the *Sunday Times* article which followed it, seem to me to confirm, far more forcibly than I could, the arguments I used in 1900.

While in a nursing-home, recovering from an operation, I was visited by an old friend from Paris, prominent in French sporting circles and a member of our Jockey Club, who came to give me his experiences of the visit.

He told me that shortly before the King was due to arrive from Rome, the authorities had got wind of an intended demonstration, planned by the influence which for years had been hostile to England; and that, in consequence, the station fixed for the arrival was altered at the last moment.

Notwithstanding this, large groups of organised demonstrators were assembled in the streets as the procession left the station, where my informant was present. He said that on the appearance of the King the gracious, friendly bearing of H.M. made such an impression on the crowds that, instead of the tactics originally intended, an awkward and rather puzzled attitude on the part of some of them was the worst feature of the reception, while many even raised their hats.

The following day, he said, he was again among the spectators when the King drove through the streets of Paris. On this occasion he was received with positive enthusiasm by the masses crowding the streets through which he drove, while next day wild cheering greeted him wherever he appeared.

My friend concluded with the remark: "Had he stayed yet another day, I verily believe they would have asked him to be their King."

While I write (October 18, 1925), a letter which appears in *The Times* over the name of Sir Vincent Caillard, headed "Protection and Corruption," recalls to me an incident of many years ago.

One day when Mr. Chamberlain's Tariff Reform proposals were of paramount interest, the subject was discussed at luncheon at Devonshire House. My old friend and brother-officer Sir Edgar Vincent (now Lord d'Abernon, Ambassador at Berlin) and I were the only guests.

Sir Edgar, with his vast knowledge of finance, advanced many arguments in favour of Free Trade, which, with all due deference, I confessed were to me unconvincing. On his recommending me to study Blue-books on the subject, I answered that the evidence of my own eyes and the attitude of the foreign Press in regard to it were quite sufficient for me.

I was about that time frequently travelling between Paris and London, and on several occasions I made use of the Dieppe-Newhaven route, crossing by the night boat.

I have never forgotten the uneasy impression given me those nights when I stood on the quay at Dieppe before going on board, watching the loading of the steamer preparatory to departure.

I used to wonder whether others noticed the mass of farm produce, daily food-supply of every description, with which these vessels were crowded. And the thought came to me that if only our Kentish farmers realised the amount of the commodity which formed their stock-in-trade which night after night left Dieppe for Newhaven,

they would have ground for reflection whether it was they, or a system, which was responsible for the loss entailed.

Moreover, my experience had, I said, taught me that on this topic all the enemies of England (and at that time we had hardly a friend in Europe) were terrified lest we should adopt the policy advocated by Mr. Chamberlain. Indeed, I had even seen the subject alluded to as if to do so would constitute a serious breach of good faith on our part.

This does not seem to confirm the view which I have been led to believe Cobden held in his time, i.e. that other nations would follow our lead in regard to Free Trade.



## CHAPTER XXXI

### “WELTPOLITIK”—GERMAN CRITICISM—GERMAN METHOD

EXPERIENCE gained when mixing with Germans during the years I was abroad gave me the impression that among those best informed a large proportion were only half-hearted as regards the slogan of *Weltpolitik*.

There was, of course, ever before them the problem raised by steady increase of population demanding an outlet in some direction or another ; but on the form it should take opinions were divided. Naturally, when considering the subject, the glamour of the British Empire attracted those seeking a solution of the problem. “Wherever we look on the map we find England, England everywhere before us,” was a remark I heard more than once. If to this feeling were added signs that some leaders of opinion in England had persuaded themselves, and were persuading others, that war would be no more, small wonder the Junker was encouraged in his aspirations.

But I found that there were many in Germany who had begun to doubt whether colonisation was really the *métier* of the German so far as administration was concerned, while their experiences during the operations against the Herreros in South-west Africa had given food for reflection as to methods of warfare outside

Europe. In any case I got the impression that it was gradually dawning on those who studied seriously and calmly the question of that "place in the sun" that peaceful penetration was preferable to force.

In 1904, while I was attached to a mission to Stuttgart, during a conversation which took place in the Royal Palace, and at which several high authorities both military and civil were present, this subject was touched on. It was generally admitted during the conversation that in the matter of colonial warfare they had much to learn from England. Indeed, one of those present openly expressed the opinion that colonisation was not the game in which Germany excelled. He even half-jokingly added, "Are not the British possessions sufficient for our energies? Do not their colonies offer us facilities enough for placing comfortably and successfully our surplus population, without any of the responsibilities of administration or government?" And he concluded by saying that time would prove that in their case the rôle of the cuckoo was the policy which paid in the long run.

#### GERMAN CRITICISM

I cannot say that among the younger ranks of the officers I found the same views obtained. To them the bait of that "place in the sun" seemed specially attractive. Criticism of our conduct of operations in colonial wars was at times openly and freely expressed, largely by those who had little or no experience of real warfare.

Once at Homburg, when my old friend General

Sir Arthur Paget and I were lunching at Ritters' with some dozen German officers, a discussion arose regarding the South African War, from which Arthur had only recently returned with a most distinguished record of service.

He and I were at opposite ends of a long table, and I had not been paying attention to the conversation at his end of it. He suddenly called to me for my views regarding the criticisms which, it appeared, the German officers had made regarding both our strategy and tactics during the war. After some enquiry it seemed to me that the actual point at issue was whether, had they been confronted with our task in South Africa, they would have done better than we did.

It was an awkward point on which to venture an opinion without giving offence ; so I thought it wise not to particularise too closely, and replied that, in my opinion, events during the war proved that any other Power than England would most likely have lost her colony, for in any case the vital point on which the final issue hung, no matter how long delayed, was command of the sea.

The minds of the German officers present that day may have reverted to a famous telegram, possibly even to certain overtures which passed just at the most critical moment of the war. At any rate, my reply was received in silence, and thus an awkward incident closed.

#### GERMAN METHOD

I have often pondered over the secret of German prosperity when considered comparatively with industrial conditions at home.

I remember one day many years ago, while travelling alone across that vast plain which extends for a large part of the route traversed between Hanover and Berlin, being much struck by the evidences of this which I observed on the journey. I had then quite recently ascended the Rhine from Cologne to Frankfurt, where the same impression had been conveyed to me. At that time several years had elapsed since I had traversed the same routes, and I was astonished at the change which had taken place meanwhile. Huge towns had sprung up where it seemed a few years ago there were only small villages, factories with tall smoking chimneys were dotted along what used to be a bare open landscape devoted mainly to agriculture. Everywhere, so far as the onlooker could judge, business was humming, and I got the impression given when watching a nest of industrious ants.

The smart, well-set-up railway officials, their chiefs in uniforms cut to satisfy the most exacting inspecting officer, the signs of method and discipline in work which I observed throughout, all gave me to think during that journey. And I remember just before we reached Berlin that evening saying to myself, "Surely these conditions are, at any rate partially, brought about by two things, both of which we at home are often told should stink in our nostrils, Protection and Conscription."

As stated elsewhere, with no pretence to knowledge of fiscal subjects but merely from impressions derived abroad, I have long been an ardent Protectionist; but as for conscription,

like so many British officers, militarism, in the sense so often ascribed to the word, in no way appealed to me. To my mind, so long as we are prepared with adequate measures for defence of our Empire, militarism, if it can thus be termed, begins and ends there for us.

Since the days I speak of, the Great War has come and gone, leaving its lesson behind. Has that lesson gone home? Is there not some ground for reflection in the marvellous industrial recovery which has been made by the vanquished, compared with the conditions now existing in Europe in some of the countries which emerged victorious?

It is, I think, commonly acknowledged that the "will to work" is the mainspring on which this contrast rests. Whence originates this "will to work" in the country which of all others would be presumed to be most adversely affected by the War?

Is it not due to early training in discipline and method, instilled throughout the nation from youth upward? And if so, might it not be possible to conceive that after all there must have been something worthy of reflection in a system which, under its pre-war conditions, was anathema to every free-born Briton within the Empire?



## CHAPTER XXXII

### THE NATIONAL SERVICE LEAGUE

It has often struck me how little was realised of the early days of the National Service League. I trust, however, that any light I may be able to throw upon the movement which first originated the League will not be misunderstood as in any way seeking to minimise the splendid work subsequently achieved by that great soldier whose name is for all time most justly associated with it, and to whose influence alone is due the important organisation which the League ultimately became.

The history of the National Service League is the story of the great discouragement which met Lord Roberts in his effort to awaken his country to a sense of her danger.

Alas! in no way can it be claimed that this movement met with more than comparative success, and that, possibly except to those behind the scenes, was imperceptible. The reluctance to realise a nasty home-truth, coupled with apathy, was, to my mind, the main obstacle to the progress of the movement, and the Great War was on us before the progress already made had had time to bear fruit.

With the impressions I had derived shortly after my arrival in Vienna, which I have already alluded to, it was only natural that when occasion

offered I should take advantage of it to urge the importance of serious consideration of the problem of Home Defence.

And thus it came about that one evening, after a public dinner at which I had spoken on the subject, I was approached by Lord Newton, who was present, and invited by him to attend the meeting of a few gentlemen interested in the subject, which had been fixed to take place the following Sunday in his house in Belgrave Square. It was thus I was privileged to be present at the birth of what ultimately became the National Service League. My memory is hazy as to the date, or those who were there, but I think I am correct in naming Sir Clinton Dawkins and Mr. Buckle, Editor of *The Times*, as being among the few that were present.

That day the importance of advocating the formation of a strong home defence force, organised in due proportion of the three arms, and enlisted voluntarily wholly and solely for taking on an invader of our shores, was the gist of the discussion. I had always understood that the military leaders of the Junker element in Prussia, once the importance of sea-power was realised, considered that the invasion of England was only possible following on a successful battle in the North Sea, and that to that aim all their efforts were being directed. Under existing conditions they certainly had grounds for this assumption. But once they knew that a home force was awaiting them prepared to resist invasion, the temptation to build Dreadnoughts, with its consequent costly competition, must

surely disappear; while there could be no doubt as to which was for us the more economical policy.

After the meeting Lord Newton and I went round to Lowndes Square and asked the Duke of Wellington to become the first President of the new League, to which he readily consented. Being then an officer on full pay, I refrained from taking any active part in the scheme until after I had retired.

Soon afterwards Lord Roberts threw into the movement his vast influence and energy, and, once he was associated with it, rapid strides were made.

After my return from abroad and retirement from the Army, I joined the League, and spoke in public on behalf of it on various occasions. Lord Roberts used often to question me as to how I got on at meetings where he had sent me telegrams which I could read out in public. When, as was frequently the case, my reports as to attendance at meetings were disappointing, and he sadly deplored the slow progress made, I used to remind him that if *his* warnings were received apathetically, how could they be expected to listen to anyone?

Once, at a big dinner given at the Ritz in connection with the movement, he asked me what I thought of the result of the past few years' work. I said that I did not feel really unhappy about it, for I found now quite a different reception given to the subject from that accorded it when we first started. I reminded him that that very evening every speaker, including Mr.

Haldane, who was the guest of the evening, had alluded to "National Service," and the words had been received quite calmly, even as a matter of course, whereas in early days any allusion to the subject was only even tolerated half-heartedly.

No doubt there was great apathy in the country as regards the subject. The play *The Englishman's Home*, with the production of which in my official capacity at that time I had much to do, should have, I hoped, given the public a warning note. When I went to see it I felt in despair. The stalls were largely occupied by giggling boys and girls incapable of taking seriously this vital subject. The only result of the play which came to my notice was a letter from a gentleman who told the Lord Chamberlain he had insulted Germany by licensing the play. No one, the writer said, could mistake that the enemy was Germany, as the uniforms were German. I invited this gentleman to call and see me. He came, and I explained to him that all the uniforms worn in the play had been through my hands, that I knew the uniform of every army in Europe, and that special care had been taken that in this play the uniforms worn could not possibly be associated with any country in the world. And this was, so far as I saw, the only notice taken of a play from which I had hoped for big results.

The want of interest in the subject in the provinces was impossible to conceive. About 1906 a friend asked me to address a meeting, not far from my home, in his thickly-populated neighbourhood. I refused, on grounds that I

was tired of trying to get people to realise the situation. He over-persuaded me, promising a big audience. When I got there I found about fifty people in a hall capable of holding about five hundred. I was so exasperated I told the ladies present, of whom there was a fair proportion, I hoped they would never speak again to their best young man if he did not join the League, and I wound up saying, "I believe nothing will stir up the Britisher until he gets a d—d good prod from a Prussian bayonet." This remark was received with laughter. If it didn't interest, at any rate it amused.

During the War I got several communications from persons regretting how little attention had been paid to our warnings.

As an instance of the difficulties met with in attempting to persuade those who neither want to be aroused nor convinced regarding a distasteful subject, I cannot refrain from mentioning the following incident.

It occurred at a big dinner given in London in connection with commercial interests. When I was asked to return thanks for the toast of the Army, I seized the occasion, as I did in those days whenever I got it, to emphasise as forcibly as I could the necessity of preparing for the defence of our hearths and homes, menaced by an implacable enemy ever working in secret for our destruction. My words seemed to make some impression on the audience, but I was followed by the politician, who did all he could to pour ridicule on what I had said. Among other criticisms he remarked that never in his life had



he listened to such a warlike speech. I could not refrain from rising and telling him that if he called it a *warlike* speech, I called it a *warning* one, and that I trusted he might often have to listen again to such a warning.

When dinner was over and we left the table, this gentleman approached me and told me that he fully agreed with what I had said, but that of course politically it would not do for him to support such views as I had given vent to.

I afterwards watched the very successful career of this gentleman with the greatest interest.

And now that the immediate menace is presumably past, may it not exist in another form? Has not warfare from the air enormously increased its scope? The possibilities which this opens up, even to the weakest and poorest Power, make one shrink when seriously considered. Are we preparing for them? To take one instance, what about Bolshevik activity in this direction? Are our Air Force experts, with whom no nation is better equipped, listened to? and if so, what reception are they given? Are our preparations for air offensive and defensive adequate? Whilst as regards the latter, is any provision for cover in case of need for the civil population in towns under consideration? We saw in 1915 Zeppelins, which by reason of their vulnerability seemed to me before the War comparatively a *quantité négligeable*, utilised for bombing our open cities. Is it not within the bounds of possibility that the next war may be won, even before the flag drops, by the Power which, however feeble in other respects, has ever since the War concen-

trated its whole effort on domination in the air ? In short, is it not the fact that we have lost for ever many of the advantages our insular position has hitherto afforded us ? And are we doing our utmost possible to discount this loss ?

Just as I write there is much well-merited jubilation over Locarno. God grant it may be justified ; but I trust I may be excused if I am sceptical as to the leopard changing his spots, even though his claws be clipped.

My experience is that anyone who utters a word of warning is scoffed at and termed an alarmist or a militarist. Yet history repeats itself, and always will so long as the world goes on.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### IRELAND

IN spite of my home being in England, I spent a considerable part of my early life in Ireland, in my youth staying with my various relations, or later on military duty either with my regiment or on the staff.

Thus, with my father hailing from the North and my mother from the South of Ireland, I got a pretty wide experience of the country and its conditions.

And so as time went on everything that was Irish appealed to me : the beautiful scenery of its country, the bonhomie and warm-hearted nature of its people, their innate love of sport which, in spite of years of agitation, united all classes, all attracted me.

Nearly forty years ago now my interest in Irish enterprise induced me to join the Syndicate which, with my old friend Arthur Paget as chairman, initiated the racecourse and club at Leopardstown, of which we have both been directors ever since.

Leopardstown was the first attempt to introduce " gate-money " meetings into Ireland, on the lines of Sandown, which a comparatively short time before had set the example, and the idea gave rise to dismal forebodings as to how the Irish public would receive the innovation.

On the morning of the opening day, Arthur

Paget, Captain Abercromby, and I, together with several others who were concerned in the undertaking, were in the office of our genial secretary and manager, Captain "Peter" Quin, an old friend who in course of years had sold me many a good hunter, when news came that trouble had started at the station gates, where 1s. admission was charged. Urgent requests were met with a firm refusal to relax the conditions, and for a time peace seemed to be restored. About 11 o'clock, however, a messenger from the station brought us an indignant protest on behalf of several priests, who claimed that as they were admitted free of charge on every racecourse in Ireland, a similar courtesy should be shown them at Leopardstown. This was a serious question which had not hitherto suggested itself to us; but after discussion, an expression of regret that in this case preferential treatment could not be accorded was politely conveyed to them. Our messenger soon returned, saying that a riot was expected at the station, for a priest was standing on the narrow bridge that crossed the line, and by which the public approached the course, and with uplifted hand was threatening with direst penalties all and everyone who entered the gates of Leopardstown.

Strong in our faith that the attractions of sport would ultimately prevail, we stuck to our guns, and the position was finally accepted. From that day to this I never heard of a recurrence of the incident; and I hope and believe the good fathers have often enjoyed a day's sport at Leopardstown, and long may they continue to do so.

It is true that during the opening day many thousands are reported to have climbed the high walls enclosing the park of Leopardstown, but in Ireland this was regarded as merely a trifling and temporary drawback, induced by love of sport, which was soon rectified.

Ever since that critical moment Leopardstown has flourished. Its meetings were specially favoured by the presence of King Edward, twice in 1904 and again in 1907, while King George and Queen Mary honoured Leopardstown by attending a meeting in July 1911. On all occasions of their Majesties' visits the programme included a race for horses owned by naval and military officers, as well as one for farmers, for which their Majesties presented cups.

On the lamented death of our dear friend Peter Quin he was succeeded by Mr. Harold Clarke, now Keeper of the Match Book to the Irish Turf Club; and Leopardstown is now under the management of Mr. James Daly, from whose father came many of the best hunters of my day. Long may Leopardstown continue to flourish in his capable hands !

In later days I served for many years on the board of the National Bank, that bank so essentially the bank of the Irish people, which brought one closely in touch with the conditions of the country, both financially and politically.

I have always been a steadfast adherent of the Union, partly because I was proud that Ireland should take and keep her proper place in that Empire which so many of her sons had helped to build up, and partly because, in my opinion,



financial conditions prohibited any possibility of a country wholly dependent on agriculture being able to "stand on her own."

Has not this latter point been proved over and over again, ever since the sad day for Ireland when the need for the Irish vote first prompted English support for Home Rule? and have not the Irish Party always shied off any scheme which does not give them a grip on the wealth and prosperity of the North?

Besides, from many years' experience gained by mixing with all classes in the country, I suspect that if it were ever possible to obtain a plebiscite, by secret ballot untrammelled by agitation or intimidation, it would be found that all the people ask for is to be allowed to live in peace and in that security which only the Union can ensure to them.

Alas! the tragedy of it all is that while, as a result of the last great betrayal, most that is best in its interests is being slowly driven out of Southern Ireland, the stern truth of what this means is gradually making itself felt, and the realisation comes too late.

During the four years that my first appointment at Court lasted, I was for some weeks each autumn at liberty to absent myself from England, and, being by that time married, my wife and I spent my holidays chiefly in Ireland.

This was during what I since regarded as the last really happy days for Ireland, just before the disastrous election of 1906.

In those days no one who had known the country at the time of the Fenian agitation could

honestly fail to appreciate the wonderful change for the better which a steady continuity of firm but friendly policy had wrought in latter years. Wherever I went, discontent and squalor seemed to have given place to smiling faces and signs of returning prosperity which gladdened one's heart to see.

The following incident, which took place about that time, illustrates the view taken of the situation by the old-fashioned devoted Irish retainer.

I was driving for a long distance over my uncle's property in the Queen's County with Boyce, the old head keeper, who had known me since I was a boy. As we went along I called his attention to the neat whitewashed cottages, the well-thatched roofs, the careful cultivation, the well-ordered state of the fencing, and above all to the gardens bright with flowers, all so different from the conditions in my grandfather's time, and I remarked how glad I was to see signs of such prosperous conditions.

Boyce was a wag, a well-known fiddler when the jig was danced, and not at all particular in his choice of language. "Prosperous is it?" he snapped back at me, "and smar! blame to 'em too. Divil a half-penny's rint have ony of 'em 'iver paid his Laardship for the last forrtty years."

On my return from Ireland that autumn I was in London when King Edward arrived from Marienbad for a short residence previous to leaving for Balmoral. I had the honour of being invited to luncheon at Buckingham Palace, and on that occasion the King questioned me closely

as to my impression of conditions in Ireland, in which H.M. showed the greatest interest. I thus had an opportunity to recount my experiences in detail, and I rather launched into sanguine hopes for the future.

My enthusiastic report was received with expressions of the greatest satisfaction, tempered with a caution and a foresight that amounted almost to prophecy.

We were again in Ireland in 1906 during the progress of the General Election, the results of which we watched anxiously throughout. I can never forget the arrival of the London papers, with the diagrams showing day by day the gradual extinction of the hopes of the Irish Loyalists.

At the moment of the outbreak of the Great War the result of years of misrepresentation made itself felt in Ireland, and gave rise to false impressions of the true spirit of the people.

When my great disappointment came and I was unable to go to France, the idea of a recruiting campaign in Ireland occurred to me, and with the exceptional advantages we possessed for organisation of it, with our branches all over the country, I broached the subject among my colleagues of the National Bank. One and all, including the most ardent supporters of the Irish Party, were at once in favour of the suggestion, and later assurances of support and messages of the most friendly nature were received from the highest authoritative sources among the Irish Party leaders. Alas! when the idea was mooted confidentially in London, it received no encouragement from the Government, rather the

reverse, and the scheme had to be dropped. About two years later the most prominent Nationalist of my Irish colleagues on the Board of the Bank referred to the subject, expressing the greatest regret it had not been pursued at the time, for it "was now too late."

Possibly, if only in "justice to Ireland," this comparatively trifling incident at the moment of England's crisis may be deemed worthy of record.

When America came into the War, I made another effort somewhat similar in purpose which met with the same fate.

I wrote a confidential memo asking consideration of the suggestion that America should be offered the advantages of Ireland as a training-ground and stepping-off point.

The advantages thus offered, strategically to America and financially to Ireland, were, it seemed to me, apparent, but two points of even greater importance struck me as justifying an appeal for consideration of the suggestion.

First, I argued, the presence in their midst of enthusiastic American troops going to the front would offer the Irish an object-lesson which could not fail to impress itself upon them; while, on the other hand, it seemed that the close associations engendered by residence in the country must bring home to our visitors aspects of the Irish question which till now they had never had an opportunity of appreciating. The importance of this latter point would be emphasised if, as may be pardonable to assume, the goodwill of America was possibly in the minds of those

responsible for the Irish Treaty, which followed the conclusion of the War.

It was arranged that my memo should be transmitted in strict confidence to the highest responsible authority, but I never heard of it again until some time later. This was when I read in Colonel Repington's *Memoirs* of a visit he paid to Sir John Cowans to ask him for confirmation of the report that America had come into the War. "Yes," replied Sir John; "and would you believe it, some lunatic is advocating our offering them Ireland as a training-ground."

I always hoped that in time I might meet one or other of them to tell them that I was that lunatic, and an unrepentant one; but within a comparatively short space of time death removed both my old friends, and from the moment I read Colonel Repington's book I never saw either of them again.



## CHAPTER XXXIV

### QUEEN VICTORIA

#### *The first and last occasions of my reception by Her Majesty*

I WAS reminded the other day by my old friend and brother-officer in the Coldstream (now Lieut.-General Sir Alfred Codrington, Colonel of the regiment) of an episode which I may perhaps be allowed to allude to as my first presentation at Court.

Codrington said his mother had often told him, and I then remembered having heard of it from my mother, how both of us had been taken together in our infancy by our mothers to the Queen, Her Majesty having expressed a wish to see two Coldstream Crimean babies.

We had both been born in the spring of 1854, after our fathers had left for the seat of war, Codrington's father later holding high commands at the front, while mine had been killed at the battle of Inkerman. The actual date on which we were received seems doubtful, but it was probably in 1857, when Sir William Codrington had returned Commander-in-Chief of the Army from the Crimea, and my father's brother was at that time Lord-in-Waiting to the Queen.

It seems appropriate to record here how, just about thirty years later, I was one of a small band who were honoured by the gracious notice

of Her Majesty. It was in 1885, when the Guards Camel Regiment on its return from the Nile Expedition was steaming up the Solent, bound for Southampton.

On entering the Solent we had hoisted and flown from the mast-head a flag on which Count Gleichen, then a subaltern in the Grenadiers, had painted an enormous camel, and thus our identity was soon established, not only on board the numerous ships we were passing, but also along the shore. Our vessel was therefore the object of a most enthusiastic reception, ships "manning yards" as we passed them, while the cheering from all quarters on shore was tremendous.

Suddenly, just as we were passing opposite the Head Quarters of the R.Y.S. at Cowes, came a signal from Osborne that Her Majesty wished to inspect us, and we were halted and moored for the night off Cowes.

The next morning we marched up to Osborne, and were formed up in line, in the grounds, facing the house. The Queen came out, and walked down the line, immediately attended by Colonel Boscawen, who had commanded us all through the arduous campaign. Known as "The Star" (the name of one of his father's racehorses) by all his friends, he had indeed endeared himself to all ranks who served under him, both as Adjutant to the 2nd Battalion Coldstream and later as officer commanding the Guards Camel Regiment.

As the Queen approached where I was standing in front of the ranks, at "open order," the Star

murmured my name. Her Majesty gave me the sweetest smile and said : " Very glad to see you back again, Mr. Dawson." These words ever remain in my memory.

The last occasion on which I had the honour of being received by the Queen was in the early spring of 1899, when Her Majesty was at Cimiez.

I was at Monte Carlo, when I received a summons to dine and sleep at Cimiez. I was informed that the Queen had heard I was somewhere on the Riviera, but did not know where, and Monte Carlo not being specially sympathetic to Her Majesty, I was warned on no account to let out where I came from.

The party that night at dinner was a very small one : Princess Beatrice was with the Queen, and the only other guests besides myself were Duke George of Leuchtenberg and the Duc and Duchesse de Rivoli.

The Queen, who seemed in the best of health and spirits, conversed freely and generally round the table during dinner, with a knowledge and judgment of current events that fairly astounded me when I realised that Her Majesty was in her eightieth year.

But words fail me to describe the impression made on me by the marvellous linguistic talent she displayed. I had by that time acquired sufficient experience in languages to enable me to discern, with fair certainty, by their accent the nationality of a person speaking in French or German, as well as English.

The Queen that night, during a general conversation round the table, talked in French to

the Rivolis, in German to Leuchtenberg, and in English to me, so far as I could judge with an accent as faultless as if she had been a native of any of the three countries.

Thus between the first and the last occasion on which I had the honour of being received by the Queen a period verging on forty-five years elapsed, a privilege which I am proud to record.

## CHAPTER XXXV

DOVER, 1901-1903

WHEN my six years in Paris came to an end in 1901, operations in South Africa were still in progress, and I immediately repeated my request to be allowed to go out there, but I was once more refused, on the grounds that they were not sending out any more officers of my rank.

As a sop I was offered command of a "provisional battalion" then quartered at Dover, which I gladly accepted. This so-called battalion was made up from three regiments, the Royal Sussex, the Leinster Regiment, and the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, all with units out in South Africa, the drafts for which were drawn from the provisional battalion. I had, therefore, at Dover three orderly rooms, with clerical staff and bands, so I was at any rate strong in music!

While handing over to me, my predecessor explained that I had under my command practically a brigade, which comprised the whole of the Dover garrison, except the Artillery, with a total strength varying from 1,500 to 1,800 all ranks; but, he said, it was impossible ever to get a full-strength parade on account of the large number of "duty men" (some 350, he stated) who marched out of barracks daily at 9 a.m. for "duties" in the town. I instituted a close enquiry as to these "duties," and with the support of the G.O.C. at once reduced this farce



of "duty men" to a reasonable minimum; while during the summer-time by 9 a.m. I had already concluded a field day with a full-strength muster.

I may here mention that the G.O.C. to whom I reported myself on arrival at Dover was General Sir H. Hallam Parr, under whom I had served when in the Mounted Infantry in 1882. He received me most cordially when I came to Dover, and helped me considerably in what was to me a new experience.

Hallam Parr left Dover soon after my arrival, and was succeeded by another old friend of Egyptian days, General Sir Leslie Rundle. To this day I retain most grateful memories of what it meant to me in Dover having there two such sympathetic friends as the General and Lady Rundle.

During my time there I gained much experience which my previous work had not afforded me, and I set myself to prove that, though command in connection with regimental work was new to me, I could take on the job.

Practically the only leave I gave myself that year was for three days in Epsom week, and when, late in the year, the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Roberts, came down to inspect us, I was amply rewarded by his kindly recognition of the work I had done; as a result of which Sir Evelyn Wood, who came with him as G.O.C. South-eastern District, told me that evening that I was to be put forward for promotion to General.

Within a short time after I was appointed Chief Staff Officer of the South-eastern District.



DOG I R, 1902.



But my military career was cut short suddenly early in 1903 by illness, followed by an operation, which though it was then proved to have been quite unnecessary, left me with my veins blocked in both legs, and I was told I should never be able to ride a horse again. Just then I was offered, and to my great grief had to refuse on grounds of health, the coveted post of C.S.O. on Salisbury Plain, and I then realised most sadly that my military career was finished. Happily, at the very moment of my bitter disappointment, unknown to me, the supreme consolation was awaiting me. While going through a course of rest which had been prescribed for me, and for which I had kindly been invited to the house of my uncle and aunt, Sir George and Lady Higginson, at Marlow, I met the lady who was destined to become my wife. We were married at Medmenham in December of that year, and from that day commenced the happiest time of my life.

Eventually King Edward, with His Majesty's ever-kindly thoughtfulness, appointed me in 1904 to a post in the Royal Household, and thus, owing to favours since most graciously extended to me, I have been privileged to pass over twenty years in three successive posts, involving both work and responsibility, for which I am ever most humbly grateful.

## CHAPTER XXXVI

THE ORDER OF MERIT: FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE—HON. JOSEPH  
H. CHOATE—PRINCE LICHNOWSKI

I CANNOT omit from my reminiscences a pathetic incident which always remains in my memory.

In December 1907, in my capacity as Secretary to the Order of Merit, which Order had only a few years previously been instituted, I was sent for by the King and charged with a mission on His Majesty's behalf.

He told me that Miss Florence Nightingale, the heroine of Crimean days, was at that moment lying dangerously ill in London, probably at the point of death, and the King said he wished before she died to confer upon her the Order of Merit. I was, therefore, to go at once to her house, and, subject to medical permission, to hand her personally, on behalf of His Majesty, the insignia of the Order of Merit, at the same time conveying to her verbally a most gracious message from the King.

Having previously given warning of my visit, I drove at once to Miss Nightingale's house in South Street, Park Lane, where, on arrival, I interviewed the nurses. On enquiring whether my visit in person would be medically permitted, and, if so, agreeable to Miss Nightingale, I was informed that she was expecting me, and would be delighted to receive me in her room.

On this I was taken upstairs, and on entering



the room I found this noble old lady lying in her bed, feeble and evidently in a most exhausted condition. On seeing me, however, she rallied a bit, smiled at me, and, slightly raising herself, murmured a few words of welcome, which encouraged me to hand her the insignia of the Order and deliver the gracious message I had been charged with by the King.

She was quite able to ask me to express to the King her feeling of deepest gratitude for His Majesty's kindly thought and for the honour conferred upon her, and then I took my leave and bowed myself out of the room as quietly as I could.

She lingered on for a short time after that, and I was glad to learn that my visit had not in any way disturbed the last days of a life which had been so nobly devoted to assuaging the sufferings of our sailors and soldiers.

#### SIR JOSEPH HOOKER

Another instance of King Edward's ever-kindly thought was when, in July of that same year, he told me one morning that Sir Joseph Hooker had just celebrated his ninetieth birthday, and that he was anxious to confer on him the Order of Merit as a birthday present.

I motored down that day to Sunningdale, where Sir Joseph was then living, and handed to him the insignia of the Order. I found him in wonderful health, considering his great age, and he was immensely touched and gratified at receiving this mark of distinction from his Sovereign and at the kindly thought which prompted it.

Since writing the above I find that by December 1907, when I visited Florence Nightingale, I had just been succeeded as Secretary of the Order of Merit by my old friend and brother-officer Colonel Harry Legge, but that, he being at the moment in attendance on the Kaiser, who was then paying a visit to London, the King had selected me for a mission which I shall ever feel it an honour to have been entrusted with.

#### THE HON. JOSEPH H. CHOATE

Among the many friends I made in the Corps Diplomatique during my four years as His Majesty's Master of the Ceremonies, I retain a feeling of esteem and admiration for the memory of Mr. Choate, the United States Ambassador of those days to the Court of St. James's. I made his acquaintance shortly after my first appearance as a member of the King's Household, and the incident which turned an acquaintance into a lasting friendship seems worthy of recording here, for I am grateful for it.

In a large measure I owed my appointment to the fact that I had spent many years in foreign capitals in an official position and had thus got to know personally a number of the prominent diplomats in Europe. And thus I entered upon my new duties with keen enjoyment, not un-mixed with a leaven of confidence.

One day, however, this latter was seriously shaken. In a letter which I had rather hurriedly drafted and addressed to Mr. Choate on a matter connected with my office, I made a slip in some way which I cannot now call to mind, but which

at any rate gave offence to the United States Ambassador, who at once made a report of the case in high quarters. Before many hours had elapsed I was summoned to receive the reprimand which no doubt I fully merited.

On leaving I went in to see Lord Knollys, and on him asking me "What are you going to do now?" I replied that I was going to Carlton Gardens (the Embassy) to endeavour to put the matter straight. Thereupon my old friend tried hard to dissuade me from taking such a course, for he said he was doubtful as to the reception I should get, and that possibly I might only make matters worse by calling personally.

Notwithstanding this, I made my way at once to the Embassy and asked to see the Ambassador. On being shown into his study, I had hardly got through one-half of the carefully worded expression of regret which I had composed *en route* before I found my hand warmly grasped by His Excellency, while he at once met me half-way by saying how much he on his part regretted that any action of his should have got me into trouble.

At that moment, I am proud to think, originated a firm and lasting friendship. In the years that followed, Mr. Choate, accompanied by his charming wife and daughter, on more than one occasion came and stayed with us at Medmenham, and I was pleased to hear from him that he found the quiet week-ends he passed there a rest and relaxation from the busy life and responsibilities of his high position. He used to sit for hours together on the lawn there reading,

and studying meanwhile the many types of pleasure-seekers spending their Sunday holiday on the river, which were to him a never-failing source of interest, while the charm of the bird-life in the Thames Valley was a great attraction to him.

While in conversation with him shortly before he gave up his post as Ambassador, a remark he made remains in my memory to this day.

He was recounting some of his experiences while in England, and the impressions he had derived therefrom. "To my mind," he said, "there are far too many holidays in this country, and far too much time is devoted to amusement and recreation. Eventually, such conditions cannot but militate against the prosperity of any country, for only hard work is the real essence of success."

When one considers that these words were spoken many years before the Great War, they seem to me to give food for reflection nowadays.

On his retirement from his post in London, Mr. Choate was given a farewell entertainment at the Mansion House, and the representative gathering, amounting to some hundreds, which assembled to do him honour would have justly aroused in anyone a sense of pride and satisfaction.

After speeches from the Archbishop of Canterbury and some of the greatest among our statesmen, when he rose to reply, as he did in tones of the deepest emotion, I shall never forget how his personality and charm of address seemed to dominate and carry with it the whole of his

audience. It was indeed a worthy "send-off" to the representative of the great Republic.

While in retirement at home he devoted himself to literature, and I am proud to have in my little library several copies of his works, including reminiscences of his boyhood and youth, kindly sent me by him during his lifetime, and by Mrs. Choate after his lamented death.

#### PRINCE LICHNOWSKI

When my old friend and former colleague in several capitals of Europe, Prince Lichnowski, was appointed German Ambassador in London, I was delighted to hear that he was coming, for I felt that in him we should have in our midst during those critical times a gentleman who was sure to realise, and that quickly, the truth regarding our attitude to his country; with the certainty that when once he had grasped it, no ulterior motives would prevail with him for purposes of misrepresentation.

When he arrived in London I lost no time and called on him at once.

After exchanging greetings at meeting again, I expressed surprise at seeing him return once more to the diplomatic profession, from which he had some time previously retired. Since we had last met he had married, and I had understood he intended to settle down and live in retirement on his estates. On my mentioning this he replied that he had certainly intended to do so, and that he had looked forward with pleasure to a quiet existence with his wife and family. But he said that the Kaiser had made



a great point of him taking the post in London, which had been rendered vacant by the death of Baron Marschall von Bieberstein. He told me he had for some time resisted the persuasive arguments used to induce him to emerge from his retirement, but that at last he had yielded to them. Then he told me that he had only done so on one condition, and that was that he should be allowed to use his utmost endeavours to smooth over and alleviate in every way the strained relations which had arisen between our two countries, and which he most heartily deplored. His condition had been accepted, and he had now arrived full of hope and even some confidence that he would succeed in the task which he had set himself.

That evening we spent some considerable time together discussing the pros and the cons, with the possibilities for the future that was before him, and I left him with a feeling of satisfaction at the thought that if there was *one* man who could bring the ship into calm water, that man had most providentially come among us.

We met again on several occasions, and I found him pleased with his reception by the authorities in London, and even hopeful for the future.

Shortly after their arrival Prince and Princess Lichnowski gave a dinner at the Embassy for the King and Queen, to which my wife and I were bidden.

Lord Haldane was among the guests invited, and while we were awaiting the arrival of their Majesties he came up to me, and, saying he had

been told I was an old friend of the new Ambassador, asked me what I could tell him about him. I replied in glowing terms regarding the personality and probity of my friend, through whom I felt sure the truth about British feeling towards Germany would soon reach Berlin, a point which seemed to me of the highest importance.

On the question of comparison with his predecessor, I remarked that, in my opinion, the two men were the absolute antithesis of one another. But I thought that while we could now depend on absolute fairness as to representation of our attitude, it was possible that, with all his great position socially, the new Ambassador might not carry the same weight with the German public, especially in militarist circles, which his predecessor, with his recent record of service in Turkey, had been assured of. Thus the advantage we had undoubtedly gained by the change might perhaps to some extent be discounted.

As time went on and we saw more of Prince and Princess Lichnowski, a warm friendship matured between us and them. On more than one occasion they came to stay with us at Medmenham, and I can only hope they derived as much enjoyment from those happy days they spent with us as we did from having them there.

At the moment the storm burst, and the awful catastrophe which caused their departure from London was on us, we had, to our deep regret, no chance of seeing them personally ; but to this day I remember the break in the voices which came across the telephone bidding us a sad farewell on the morning they left London for

Berlin ; while among our correspondence my wife and I treasure the words they wrote us on the eve of their departure. To my deep regret I have never had an opportunity to meet either of them since.

As I repeated in various quarters at the time, I knew we had parted with one for whose integrity and honesty of purpose I would put my hand in the fire.

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### THE WAR OFFICE, 1914-1919

LORD KITCHENER—SIR HENRY SCLATER—LORD FRENCH—  
SIR WILLIAM ROBERTSON—LORD CURZON

WHEN in 1914, two days before war was declared, I offered my services to Lord Kitchener, he at once accepted them, and, in view of my having passed six years with the French Army, offered me to take up immediately a responsible post with the French Head Quarters. When, to my great disappointment, it was found impracticable for me to accept a post which involved my leaving England, Lord Kitchener very kindly took me into the War Office, where I was given congenial work under Sir Henry Sclater, Adjutant-General.

I saw a good deal of Lord Kitchener from time to time. He always welcomed me in his room to discuss matters connected with my work, and on several occasions sent for me to be present at conclaves which were extremely interesting. In the early days of the new divisions he twice sent me round to visit and report on them, both in the first days when they were being formed, and again six weeks later—a most instructive experience which I would not have missed for anything.

SIR HENRY SCLATER

Of my relations with my immediate chief, Sir Henry Sclater, during those years of strain and

stress, I retain to-day the warmest and most grateful recollections. Indeed, to have had the good fortune to serve under so kindly and distinguished a soldier during the crisis was to a large extent a solace for the disappointment I had sustained. However busy at the time Sir Henry may have been, his advice and assistance were ever ready for me in connection with my particular job, which, after all, was only concerned with Home Defence.

The last time I ever saw Lord Roberts, just a day or so before his departure for France, was when I found him alone with the Adjutant-General as I ran into his room with some papers.

On Lord Roberts expressing surprise at finding me thus employed, the eulogistic terms in which the A.G. referred to my services in the War Office compensated me for much.

We little thought as we bade farewell to the Field-Marshal—the idol of the Army—that morning that it was the last time we should see him.

The news of Sir Henry's death shortly after the conclusion of the War came as a great shock and a real sorrow to me.

#### LORD FRENCH

When Lord French came home and assumed command of the Home Forces, my work brought me into close touch with him and I moved across to the Horse Guards. I thus got a welcome opportunity of serving under and seeing much of the Field-Marshal. During the latter years of the War an acquaintance, begun in the Sudan



more than thirty years before, ripened into a warm mutual friendship.

Just before the end, as he was leaving London to pass his last moments at Deal, I received a message from him which I shall always treasure.

When Lord French gave up his command, I had the extreme gratification to serve under his successor, Field-Marshal Sir William Robertson, until my retirement, which, under the circumstances, I regretted came so soon after he had assumed the command.

## LORD CURZON

Even while I write I learn with deep regret of the death of one whose friendship I have long valued, which is my excuse for a short digression.

My mind goes back to a certain night about forty years ago, when George Curzon and I were the guests of a dear mutual friend. That night at dinner the conversation turned on bimetallism, a subject then quite new to me. I was amazed at Curzon's knowledge of it and asked him how he knew so much about it. On going up to bed, he led me to his room and dragged out a small portmanteau. It was full of every possible book of reference. He told me he never travelled without these books, and that whenever a subject cropped up on which he wanted posting he referred to them. He added that he often travelled abroad in search of knowledge which could only be acquired on the spot, and that during his journeys he never entered a country without previously studying all he could about it—population, religion, armed forces,

staple products, industries, exports and imports, etc. I told him I envied his retentive memory; and I learnt that night, and never forgot, the secret of his great ambitions and something of the method of the huge success which so justly fulfilled them hereafter.

A remark once made to me by an Ambassador accredited to London made me wonder how many of our statesmen (Lords Rosebery and Curzon excepted) thought about foreign travel, at any rate in connection with the Foreign Office.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### MEDMENHAM ABBEY

I FEEL sure that anyone who has followed my effort to record some of the events and impressions of my life will agree with me that, in spite of vicissitudes, I have been fortunate in my endeavour to temper work with relaxation.

And the crowning blessing vouchsafed me was when in 1903 at the age of forty-nine I settled down and married.

My wife at the time we met was living at Medmenham Abbey, which, dating from the reign of King Stephen, had only recently been restored. A few years after we married we were able to purchase the little property, consisting of land on both banks of the Thames, as well as the islands below.

Here we passed the twenty happiest years of my life, engaged, whenever my duties in London enabled me to absent myself, in improving the surroundings of what I always look on as one of the beauty-spots of England.

But when the War came to an end, grinding taxation and increasing price of labour forced us to the conclusion that we could not adequately keep up and preserve what we had created, and to our great grief we parted with Medmenham in 1920, and soon after settled in our present home.

Just before we left Medmenham we adopted

a little girl, who for the past seven years has brought an ever-increasing joy and interest into our lives.

But in the autumn of 1921 came the *revers de la médaille*, and in my old age I have passed through an ordeal such as I sincerely hope has rarely, if ever, occurred to anyone.



MEDMENHAM ABBEY, BEFORE RESTORATION.





## CHAPTER XXXIX

### MY EXPERIENCES OF THE LAW

It will, I hope, be understood that, in recording my unfortunate experiences which follow, I do so in no vindictive spirit ; the City Equitable case was disposed of, as I earnestly trust, once for all by the judgment given in May 1924.

But in writing my reminiscences of a long and varied life, I feel it would not be right to conclude them without fulfilling what I consider to be a duty, specially to all directors of public companies. For I think it is right they should be warned of what, according to my experience, may be in store for them, however honestly and conscientiously they may perform their duties to the best of their ability, should fraud bring about the ruin of a company with which they are connected.

I trust that my exposure of facts on a subject as to which so many have been misled may possibly be the means of saving others in the future from the prolonged period of mental anxiety and worry we, directors of the City Equitable, were subjected to, of which in one case the result was fatal, while in my own it is now certain I can never again recover my health.

In August 1914, shortly after the War broke out, I was approached by my old friend and neighbour Sir Frank Crisp regarding a certain reinsurance

company which was to be brought out, on the board of which he suggested I might like to take a seat. He had frequently listened to my views regarding the German menace to peace in Europe, and he told me that here was a chance to get a score off the German. Hitherto, he explained, German and Austrian financiers had in England enjoyed a monopoly of the business of *reinsurance*, making thereby an annual profit which he estimated at eight millions sterling. It was proposed to start a British reinsurance company, with a small capital at the outset, to take over the business of the foreigner banished by the War.

The idea attracted me, I accepted, and after many negotiations the company was eventually brought out in the spring of 1915, with an addition of £50,000 to the original capital of £12,000.

It is not here my intention to go into financial detail. I never professed to be a judge of finance or investments; moreover, the relevant facts were mostly brought out and discussed during the twenty-six days the City Equitable case occupied. The whole subject was to me, from the moment we discovered the fraud, so revolting, that even now, while slowly and only partially recovering from the serious illness brought on by three years of uncalled-for mental anxiety and worry, I dread the effects which might result from referring to it. I propose therefore to avoid, so far as possible, all detail and only to state the case as it personally affected me.

We started on modest lines with a small board, composed, as regards chairman and members,

of gentlemen who were entirely sympathetic. From the start we prospered, and by 1916 we showed profits equal to the original capital of the company. Small wonder we were proud of the success, mutually congratulated each other, and looked forward hopefully to the future!

I may have been too sanguine, but I have always held that it was only fraud which prevented the City Equitable becoming one of the most gigantic successes in the insurance world.

But, alas! our very success and prospects were destined to be our ruin: various enterprises of a similar nature sprang up, and, as regards the City Equitable, we began to hear rumours of possible acquisition of a dominant holding in our shares from several quarters. My only fear was that we might become a "one-man show," and I must confess that when I eventually learnt that we had been practically bought up by a leading stockbroker, I consoled myself by saying that at any rate he would spread the holdings in the company amongst his clients, and that our interests would be his and theirs too.

I may here state that till then I had never even heard of Bevan or his firm.

As the holder of a vastly predominant interest in the company, it was natural that Bevan should be elected chairman, and our original chairman retired in his favour and left the board.

We appointed a finance committee, which, besides the chairman, consisted of gentlemen all well qualified, by their status either financially or legally, for the position.

In the light of after-events I wonder it never

struck me how risky it was that our chairman should be also our broker, but that risk could only materialise were he dishonest, which I claim we were not entitled to presume or even suspect.

After the advent of the new chairman a further increase of capital took place, and we continued to prosper to such an extent that our shares rose by leaps and bounds. I often regretted I had not been able at the start to buy more than the qualifying number of shares. Those for which I had paid 4s. I watched mount up to 67s., and yet I never parted with a share.

At the general meeting of the company in the spring of 1921 the chairman foreshadowed the absorption by the City Equitable of several of the smaller reinsurance companies, most of which had recently come into existence fired by our example. He stated that the object of this was to further the principle of establishing our business in the United States, for which purpose the acquiring of additional assets, available for investment *there*, would be of the greatest use, and indeed was essential, for thereby only were we qualified to trade there. I remember asking the chairman after the meeting why he wished to extend our business to America. I reminded him that at a previous general meeting, I think the year before, a shareholder had questioned him as to whether he thought of doing so, and that his reply in the negative had been received with applause. He answered me that he had changed his mind because several of our leading insurance companies in London had urged him to carry our business to America, and had promised us their



support if we did so. This seemed to me sound and allayed any doubts I had.

A new holding company, the City Equitable Associated, was formed that summer, and several existing companies were, either wholly or partially, absorbed as subsidiary to the parent company.

During that autumn the chairman rarely attended the board meetings, and at times the general manager also absented himself. I was about this time becoming uneasy as to our business, and I deplored the difficulties we had in so rarely being able to consult these two officials. At successive board meetings I noticed that the claims made substantially exceeded the balance we had at our banks, and I several times questioned those officials of the company who were present, on the subject. They gave me explanations which seemed reasonable; but not feeling happy as to the situation, I wrote to Mr. Milligan (a solicitor in Aberdeen and a co-director) and asked him when he came south to discuss it with me. At that time I had not a ghost of a suspicion of any sort except that we were doing "bad trading," which I found, by questioning friends in the insurance world, was at that time momentarily a pretty general experience.

Meanwhile I was invited by letter from the general manager, on behalf of the Chairman, to go on the board of the "Greater Britain," one of the subsidiary companies. I accepted, and later I found that it had been taken for granted I would serve on the board of the holding company as well as another of the subsidiary com-

panies. On my demurring to this having been done, on grounds of expense connected with the qualifying shares, I was urged to concur, as I was told that it would be derogatory to the interests of these companies if, after my name had appeared, I did not do so. After making every possible enquiry in various directions, as to status and conditions of the companies concerned, I consented. It was only at a great sacrifice that I provided the funds necessary, and when I afterwards found that at the time I handed my cheque for £500 (as qualification for a directorship of the associated company) the shares were not worth the paper the cheque was written on, I realised in what a callous, brutal manner I had been swindled. The shares of the parent and subsidiary companies had all of them a large uncalled capital, and, when the crash came, to find these amounts more than exhausted my slender resources. However, during the period preceding the crash we three newly appointed directors of the subsidiary companies, in the now very frequent absences of our chairman, buckled to and settled down to tackle the hard work entailed by the addition to our responsibilities. But the situation as regards bank balances, far from improving, got worse as winter approached, and by the time Mr. Milligan came south and I was able to have a talk with him, it looked so bad that he at once demanded a full explanation of it from the chairman.

This proved to be so unsatisfactory that the board there and then took the control into their own hands, and immediately sent a request to

the big insurance companies that an enquiry into the subject should be instituted by them, which they consented to do. The same day it was also arranged that the tariff companies should appoint a highly qualified official to take over at once the duties of the general manager. I may here state that the unfortunate gentleman who took over these duties, whom I saw frequently at the time and took a great liking to, died a short time after the conclusion of the civil case, during which he had been many hours in the witness-box, following on years of strenuous work.

After exhaustive examination of the state of our affairs the disclosures made by this gentleman were of such an astounding nature that we resolved to apply to the Courts, and the crash came.

Previous to taking this step the directors, in the hope of saving the situation, had offered to contribute a very large sum, provided that at a joint meeting between representatives of the insurance companies, the banks, and the City Equitable Board, a scheme could be devised for tiding over the crisis. The insurance companies at once readily agreed to the meeting, which I had been informed in authoritative quarters would receive most influential support; but when it came to persuading the banks, their representative, whom I interviewed personally, absolutely refused our request that they should be represented at the meeting, which was all we asked them to do. This wholly unforeseen and unfortunate attitude forced the situation, for on learning it

the directors withdrew their offer, and there was no alternative but to let matters take their course.

And now I was to find the surprise of my life. Knowing that in this matter, as I hope in everything else through life, I had conscientiously done my very best, it was with a calm and easy conscience I attended a meeting of the directors, other than Bevan, with the Official Receiver. To my astonishment, I discovered that this official considered us to be not only culpable by reason of neglect, but from his manner I gathered that he was incapable of differentiating between honest, hard-working gentlemen and the source whence came the fraud which had brought about the ruin of the company. As we left the building I remarked to my colleagues that we had been received like a lot of schoolboys who had robbed an orchard.

But this was nothing to my later experiences, when I attended four public meetings of creditors and shareholders of the various companies concerned ; at which, from his comments, I gathered that he considered the whole board of directors to be culpable, either by default or even worse.

At the first of these meetings my solicitor was seated next me, and, after the opening remarks of the Official Receiver, I asked him to take notes of them and at once to institute proceedings against that official, on my behalf, for defamation of character. To my astonishment, as we left the meeting, my solicitor informed me that he could not carry out my instructions, as this official was “ privileged ” !

At each succeeding meeting his abuse of the directors, the hints and innuendoes, got worse, until they culminated at the meeting of the holding (associated) company. Here the language used by the Receiver was so insulting to the directors that several shareholders, by then roused to a pitch of fury, rose in the body of the hall and put questions to him. One asked whether he would guarantee that we directors would be shadowed and watched as to our movements, so as to prevent us "bolting abroad, as our chairman had done." Another asked whether he would assure himself that we had paid for our qualifying shares, and other equally insulting queries were put. My deep sympathy with all these poor people who had lost their money was sorely tried on this occasion, and it was all I could do to restrain myself from rising and stating the true facts, but the sense of my position, coupled with the feeling that this attitude was only natural after what they had been told by the Receiver, prevented me.

At all these meetings I never heard one word from the Receiver as to Bevan having joined the company long after us; indeed, the trend of his remarks amounted to a hint that we were a "show board" placed there by Bevan to attract the public, his tools, and neglectful of our duties throughout, or even worse. Whereas, as stated already, I had never heard of Bevan till he joined the board, and I never once met him outside the board-room.

At the "associated" meeting I noted down verbatim the expressions used on several occa-



sions by the Receiver. When the meeting was over, I approached him, and he immediately disappeared by a door behind his chair. But I caught his second-in-command, who was seated next to him, showed him my notes, and protested most vehemently against the language his chief had used. He replied that it was impossible such words had been used. When I stated that I had written them down verbatim as they were spoken, he said: "Good God, I must see the Press at once," and rushed off to the table where the numerous reporters were busy finishing their notes. I followed him closely, and two gentlemen nearest to me got up, and one of them said to me, most sympathetically, "Don't you worry, Sir Douglas; we were not going to take notice of that."

As I rejoined my solicitor at the door of the building, he told me it was lucky for me I had delayed my departure, for there were two "ladies" with hat-pins ready, as they said, to "go for the old thief."

I tell this story in detail, and without comment. I think it teaches its own lesson!

The next morning a letter reached me from a shareholder, an officer till then unknown to me, saying that he and those around him had sympathised so much with me that they had only just abstained from rising to record their protest.

So indignant was I at the procedure and my helplessness in the matter that I twice visited and spoke about it to the highest legal authority, when I learnt, to my astonishment, that no redress was possible; and thus I had to await

events, powerless to hasten in any way the vindication of my good name.

And so I had to exist somehow for nearly three years, my health slowly giving way for want of sleep, for during many long nights the thought that anyone should dare to bring such accusations against me, without any possibility of punishing him at once, enraged me so that it eventually broke down my power of sleep. Meanwhile, my worry was added to by the attitude taken in certain quarters of the Press, which, knowing nothing of the facts beyond the Official Receiver's statements regarding them, thought fit to demand my resignation from my official duties.

The Receiver brought four summonses against me for "misfeasance," a term of which no two lawyers ever gave me the same definition, but the suspicion that it was a clumsy adaptation of the French word *malfaisance* worried me sorely. The first summons was so evidently ridiculous that he was allowed to withdraw it with costs against him personally; on appeal, however, he was allowed to charge his costs to the already impoverished company. Later, relying on this official's statements, shareholders of the associated company instituted proceedings against me in which they actually charged me with fraud. I need hardly add that, when the actual facts were realised, this action was withdrawn.

For the purpose of dealing with the summonses issued by the Official Receiver, all I could do was to place on record, for the information of the learned Counsel who were to defend me, every

scrap of information that I could give regarding the history of the company from the moment I joined it. I had been so proud of it, and worked so hard at it, that in this I was specially placed, for, with one exception, I had attended more meetings than any of the directors. During Bevan's chairmanship I had been present at 67 meetings out of a total of 83 ; and this I had done purposely, not only from interest in the enterprise, but because we were paid a small fixed fee, and not by attendances.

The chief points on which I laid stress were : (1) that most of the board were members of it long before Bevan bought up the dominating interest in the company ; (2) that we were the victims of a plot to conceal the truth from us, which, having regard to the status and duties of those concerned in it, no board, however constituted, could have coped with.

And I argued that however much Bevan had wronged me, the methods to which I had since been subjected wrought me a far more grievous wrong. The one had robbed me of my money ; the other sought to deprive me, not only of my money, but also of my good name.

I had hoped when subpoenaed as a witness for the prosecution at the two trials in the Criminal Court (the one against the chairman, the other against the general manager), to bring out these points, but was advised beforehand, in the highest quarters, to confine myself strictly to answering questions put to me, and I was asked to bear in mind that it was not *I* who was on trial. Mr. Milligan in his evidence was, I am glad to

say, able to make several vital points for which he was specially complimented. Nothing, however, deterred the jury from attaching a rider to their verdict, which showed that they differed completely from the opinion given to me as to who was on trial. Had I known beforehand that such a statement could be placed on record, I could possibly have saved much time and expense, not to mention mental suffering, in after-years. Alas! by the time the civil case came on, Mr. Milligan was laid up dangerously ill from the effects of the worry and mental torture to which he had for long been subjected. What evidence he was able to give was taken at his bedside, and he only lingered on for a short time afterwards.

During the civil case, so far as I could see, neither of the two points mentioned above was laid stress on; indeed No. 2, to the cruel detriment of the directors' case, was, apparently in deference to legal etiquette, excluded from all allusion.

How I lived through those days and sleepless nights and yet kept my reason I cannot conceive, but I determined to focus my mind on my official work, and thus, supported by an absolutely clear conscience on all the points at issue, I was enabled to see the thing through to the bitter end. I would like here to offer a tribute to the help given me by my two senior Counsel and my solicitor, to whose confidence and wise, kindly advice I owed much of my ability to "pull through" those dark days.

When at last the case came on, it dragged

through twenty-six days of a very anxious time, while the prospects of costs became appalling. The efforts to prove by wearisome quotations from judgments of ages past that "in law" I, whose guiding principle through life had been "Quod agis age," had not only neglected my duty but had done so wilfully, occupied much dreary time, and would have been comic if not so serious.

Among the many false impressions conveyed by the allegations which I had to meet was one that Bevan ruled the board, that no member of it questioned his actions, that he was a "Napoleon," and other similar nonsense.

Now, I have never been a silent member of the numerous committees I have served on, and my attitude at City Equitable board meetings, where I was a most regular attendant, was no exception to my habitual custom. If I could have got a straight answer to one-half of the questions I put, it is possible that the crash might have been averted.

I blush to record that, besides "misfeasance," the Official Receiver sought to prove me guilty of "breach of trust" and "wilful negligence."

To the consolation tendered me from many quarters that no one who knew me would believe such charges, I replied that unfortunately there were many more who did *not* know me than those who did; and for years I fretted at the thought that anyone should imagine they had lost their money through any fault of mine.

And so the case dragged on, and even when concluded after twenty-six days, I had to wait a



further seven weeks before the judgment was given and justice at last prevailed.

But by the time my good name was publicly vindicated, it came too late to save my health. The long-drawn-out torture had been gradually undermining my constitution and I just failed by a short head to stay the course.

Four days before the judgment was published I collapsed in the Mall while walking to my office, and this was followed by a long illness which very nearly proved fatal, and from which I now know I can only partially ever recover.

As already stated, had I succumbed, mine would have been the second death among the directors, not to mention a third member of the board left shattered in health by the treatment to which we were subjected.

In recording my story I have tried to adhere to facts, avoiding comment, and leaving it to the judgment of those who chance to read it as to which of the two sources whence came my trouble wrought me the more grievous wrong. In any case the fact remains that whereas I did my best to further an enterprise in which I was not only keenly interested, but of which I was very proud, I am left broken in both health and pocket.

I hope never again to have to allude to this loathsome episode; but if this record of my experience serves as a warning to those who do their best in positions of trust, my labour will not have been in vain.

## CHAPTER XL

### CONCLUSION

WHEN I had sufficiently recovered from my severe illness, I was ordered to leave London for complete change and rest. In the autumn I returned and tried to resume my official duties as best I could.

But the state of my nerves prevented me pulling my weight, and the moment arrived at the close of the year 1924 when I was allowed to retire under the age-limit.

I write these lines in my home in the country free from the responsibilities of the work I loved ; and I can only hope that more restful conditions may possibly restore me to the health I enjoyed before the experience described above broke it down.

And now in the evening of life, when I trust I may be spared yet a little while in the most happy, peaceful surroundings any man was ever blessed with, if sometimes, when looking back to illusions dispelled as time rolled on, I am reminded of those sad words, "Tout passe, tout casse, tout lasse," I try to console myself with the reflection that, while the good times lasted, at any rate I made the most of them.

THE END



SANDWICH BAY, 1921.



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